No lawmaker in House endorses Gloria impeachment

Story on PAGE A2

Anti-poverty program GMA's 'living legacy'

By Ayan C. Mellejor and Franklin A. Caliguid, *PDI Mindanao Bureau* **and Dona Pazzibugan,** *in Manila*

DAVAO CITY—A good transition President.

That's how President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she would like to be remembered.

Ms Macapagal said she envisioned a better private investment policy that by

ANTI-POVERTY/ A5

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Love, not diet, is key to weight loss, says mag

ROME—Forget dieting.

There's nothing like love to help you shed those extra pounds, according to a survey published by an Italian health magazine this week.

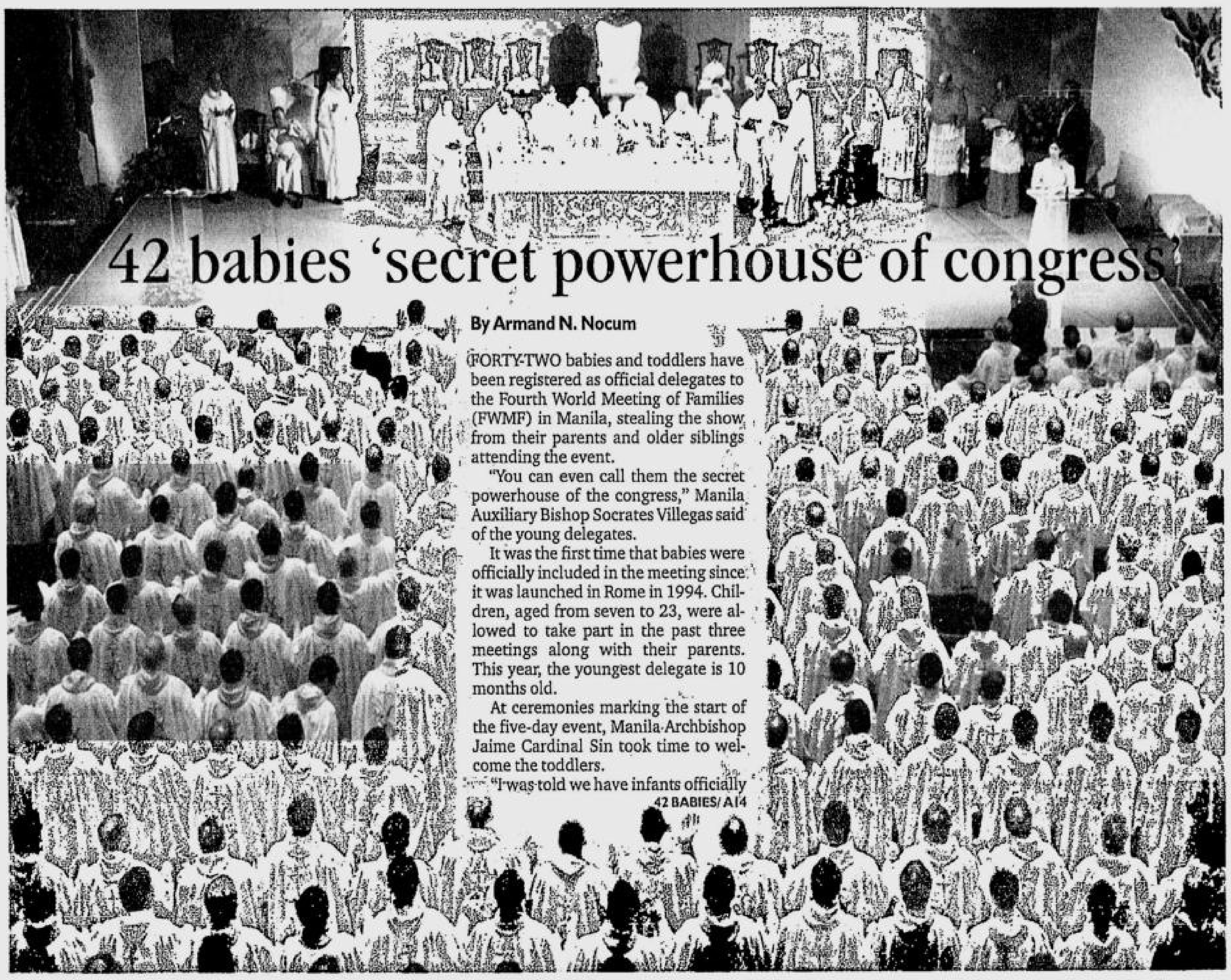
Eight out of 10 Ital-

LOVE/ A15

KELANGAN KONG UMIBIG!

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Thursday, January 23, 2003 ★ 46 pages / 4 sections / vol. 18 / no. 46 P15 website: www.inq7.net

Abaya is next AFP chief



PAGEANTRY attends the five-day Fourth World Meeting of Families (FWMF) during its opening on Wednesday at the Philippine International Convention Center. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

42 babies 'secret powerhouse of congress'

By Armand N. Nocum

FORTY-TWO babies and toddlers have been registered as official delegates to the Fourth World Meeting of Families (FWMF) in Manila, stealing the show from their parents and older siblings attending the event.

"You can even call them the secret powerhouse of the congress," Manila Auxiliary Bishop Socrates Villegas said of the young delegates.

It was the first time that babies were officially included in the meeting since it was launched in Rome in 1994. Children, aged from seven to 23, were allowed to take part in the past three meetings along with their parents. This year, the youngest delegate is 10 months old.

At ceremonies marking the start of the five-day event, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin took time to welcome the toddlers.

"I was told we have infants officially

42 BABIES/ A14

GMA names choice; 'best man for job'

By Charlie Senase, Ayan Mellejor *PDI Mindanao Bureau* **and Martin P. Marfil,** *in Manila*

"I AM not saying it . . . (but) I don't deny it," President Macapagal-Arroyo told reporters in Davao City where she spent the night on Tuesday.

Delivered with a hearty laugh, the statement referred to Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya as the next Armed Forces chief of staff when the incumbent, Gen. Dionisio Santiago, retires on April 8.

In Manila, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday said that, indeed, Abaya was being groomed as the next AFP chief of staff.

If appointed, Abaya would become only the second West Pointer to assume that post; the first was former President Fidel Ramos.

On Tuesday morning during her visit to Mamasapano town in Maguindanao, the President introduced Abaya as "the ComSouthCom and the incoming chief of staff."

Ms Macapagal went on to cite Abaya's achievements as Southcom chief especially in the recent battle in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat, where the military overran a camp belonging to a Moro Islamic Liberation Front unit allegedly allied with the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom group.

She said the battle of Columbio, with at least 28 rebels killed, was the biggest victory of her administration against criminality.

Sources said Ms Macapagal was also

ABAYA/ A15

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

UNIQUELY Filipino initiative is baby delegates, the youngest being 10 months to dramatize Church's anti-abortion/contraceptive position.

IN CORDIAL convergence of Church and State, Alfonso Cardinal Lopez Trujillo, the Papal Legate of John Paul II (at right) and Papal Nuncio Antonio Franco pay a courtesy call on President Macapagal. EDWIN BACASMAS

Joker: Palace graftbuster should be investigated

By Cynthia D. Balana and Norman Bordadora

FOR SPARING former transportation secretaries, Dario Rama, chair of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC), has been accused by Sen. Joker Arroyo of ignorance of his mandate and of "selective administration of justice."

The maverick administration senator made the accusation a day after Rama filed graft and corruption charges against Edgardo Manda, manager of the Manila International Airport Authority, and six others for their participation in the allegedly anomalous contract to build Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia).

Arroyo said Rama charged the underlings and not the former top officials of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), who, he said, were mainly responsible for the irregularities in the $650-million project of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco).

As a result, Rama relieved of any accountability Arturo Enrile, Vicente Rivera and Pantaleon Alvarez, former

JOKER/ A14

Gay activists protest Church ideal of family

By Donna S. Cueto

THE CATHOLIC Church was yesterday urged to expand its definition of "family" to include that with no or only one parent or with "same-sex partners" as parents.

The Democratic Socialist Women of the Philippines, Women's Media Circle, Women's Legal Bureau and other organizations under the Reproductive Health Advocacy Network said the ongoing Fourth World Meeting of Families must recognize these "other faces" of the Filipino family that also needed to be protected.

They said the "idealized" concept of

GAY ACTIVISTS/ A14

SWS SURVEY

Filipinos happy with family life but...

A BIG majority of Filipinos are contented with family life, but a growing number now agree that divorce is the best way out of a troubled marriage, according the latest survey on the family by the Social Weather Stations.

The nationwide survey, conducted between Nov. 15 to Dec. 2, 2002, showed that 86 percent of the 1,200 adult respondents were at least fairly satisfied with family life.

The group consisted of 27 percent who were completely satisfied (*ganap na nasisiyahan*), 29 percent very satisfied (*talagang nasisiyahan*), and 30 percent fairly satisfied (*medyo nasisiyahan*) with family life (*buhay pamilya*).

FILIPINOS/ A14

Now, its GMA's political affairs adviser batting for Cha-cha

By Carlito Pablo and Juliet Labog-Javellana

NOW it's President Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser on political affairs carrying the ball for Charter change.

Despite his boss' professed cool stance on the issue, Jose Ma. Rufino yesterday invoked Edsa as the best argument for amending the Constitution and changing the form of government. He said it was only through a parliamentary system that the Philippines could institutionalize the spirit of the two uprisings that toppled Presidents Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and Joseph Estrada in 2001.

"It is now time for us to put Edsa in parliament. If we no longer have confidence in our national leader and his government, we don't need to go out in the streets again because a parliamentary system will provide the institution to change governments," Rufino said.

But he was careful to say that he was speaking as national executive director of the ruling Lakas-CMD, and not as adviser to the President.

Rufino said it did not matter whether a constitutional convention or a constituent assembly would be employed to rewrite the Constitution.

"What needs to be done is that we should start doing it now," he said.

Rufino's remarks jibe with the supposed strategy of Lakas officials led by Speaker Jose de Venecia to undertake "quiet diplomacy" among allies of the administration to convince them that Congress should sit as a constituent as-

NOW/ A13

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Eastern section of the country particularly Eastern Visayas and Northeastern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/23/03

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Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
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Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONTPAGE

No takers for impeach rap at House

By Christine O. Avendaño
and Norman Bordadora

NARY a lawmaker came out into the open to endorse the impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

And so, a group led by former Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Francisco Tatad and Linda Montayre, secretary general of the People's Consultative Assembly, or Koalisyon, failed to have its complaint filed before the House of Representatives yesterday.

At press time last night, Montayre was still in the vicinity of the session floor, trying to woo congressmen to endorse the 22-page complaint.

The complaint accuses the President of culpable violation of the Constitution, bribery, graft and corruption and betrayal of public trust, "(the) very same offenses for which her predecessor was impeached."

Montayre and other members of Koalisyon, who are among the 16 complainants, were forced to find a congressman to endorse the complaint after House Secretary General Roberto Nazareno refused to receive it.

Nazareno told Montayre that the complaint needed to be endorsed by at least one congressman before it could be filed, in accordance with House impeachment rules.

Montayre said her group was advised it could file the complaint without an endorsement, as the group was legitimate, with a legitimate demand.

She told reporters the Koalisyon was in a hurry to file the complaint because of a report that a group identified with President Macapagal was also filing a bogus impeachment complaint.

"We were told that only one impeachment complaint against an impeachable official can be filed in a year. So we are in a hurry to file this," Montayre said.

But after learning an endorsement was necessary, she went to the session hall where the congressmen have started the session.

There were no takers.

Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, a loyalist of deposed President Joseph Estrada, told Montayre that he and other members of the minority would first read and study the complaint before deciding whether to endorse it.

Montayre pressed Dilangalen to sign the complaint forthwith so that it could be quickly filed but the congressman repeatedly told her to give the opposition a chance to "peruse" the complaint.

"It's unfair to have us sign it without reading it," Dilangalen told Montayre.

He told her that when congressmen endorsed a complaint, it was because they saw it sufficient in form and in substance.

At one point, as Dilangalen tried to brush off the persistent Montayre, he told her he was very surprised about "this development." He said he found it surprising that in 2001, Montayre still supported the President, but has now switched sides.

Montayre told reporters she would wait for Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran to show up to follow through on the group's request that he endorse the complaint.

Bayan Muna sources said Montayre went to see Beltran Tuesday night but was also told he had to study the complaint first.

Also yesterday, Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. warned Malacañang that it should make an effort not to be perceived as exerting undue pressure on the House to junk the impeachment case.

Guingona said that while it was unlikely the impeachment complaint would prosper in the House, the President's announcement of a renewed crusade against graft and corruption made it imperative that the administration allowed the petition to take its due course in Congress.

"It is very unlikely that it will prosper," Guingona said in an impromptu news briefing at the Club Filipino. "But since the President has a crusade against graft and corruption, there should be a perception of no undue pressure."

Speaker Jose De Venecia Jr., has said that he will do his ministerial duty of endorsing the impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo to the house committee on rules if a congressman signed it.

De Venecia, however, said that the complaint consisted of old allegations, most of which had already been taken up by Congress.

DILANGALEN: Won't be rushed

IMPSA DEAL

Perez not liable for his opinion, says successor

By Michael Lim Ubac

RESIGNED Justice Secretary Hernando Perez was not criminally liable for rendering an opinion on the controversial power deal awarded to the Industrias Metalurgicas Perscarmona Sociedad Anonima (Impsa).

According to Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong, his predecessor could not be sued on the basis of the legal opinion, which allegedly perfected the Impsa deal.

"I don't think anyone can be sued by doing what is required by law," said Datumanong.

He explained that nobody had been sued yet, "and I think there will be less possibility of anybody being sued for rendering a legal opinion."

Datumanong told reporters at his office yesterday that there was a presumption of regularity when Perez issued the opinion, which was dated Jan. 24, 2001 but signed on Feb. 1, 2001.

"He was doing what was required of him by law," said Datumanong who believed that rendering a legal opinion was a "sworn responsibility" of any justice chief.

Required by law

"My belief is, for rendering a legal responsibility or duty, you cannot be faulted because you are doing what the law requires you to do," he added.

Datumanong, however, admitted that Perez could be charged in connection with accusation that he had received $2 million from extradited Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

Perez had vehemently belied the accusation hurled by Jimenez, saying it was "an act of a desperate man."

"The (only) basis for a legal secretary to be sued for rendering a legal opinion (is) if there is alleged bribery or culpable violation of the Constitution," he said.

Datumanong said that the bribery allegation on the part of Perez should be treated separately from questions on the issuance of the opinion.

"No Secretary of Justice will render an opinion legalizing bribery," said the justice chief who stressed that the bribery story should be proven first.

"Let us not talk about it," Datumanong said, "(It's) not for me to say whether or not rendering an opinion... can make somebody commit a crime."

Datumanong admitted yesterday that he had yet to read the three-page opinion.

"I have taken a look at the gist of the opinion; I have yet to read the entirety of the opinion," he said.

As to whether he could draft another opinion on the Impsa deal, he said: "An opinion will be issued only when there is a need for it and when an entity asks for it. It all depends on the circumstances. Even the Supreme Court sometimes reverses itself."

Datumanong, however, was quick to clarify that he had not seen anything "suspicious" or irregular in the opinion.

"I have also seen the gist of the opinions of then Secretaries Tuquero, Cuevas and Perez. What I saw is they did their duties, responsibilities pursuant to the given situation," he said.

Extra careful

To avoid controversy he said that he would be extra careful in issuing legal opinions.

Datumanong had brought in a legal consultant to help the Office of the Legal Counsel draft opinions.

"It is my legal consultant who will help me look at the opinion of the legal counsel. (It doesn't mean) that I don't trust anybody (in the DOJ), but I want to be sure that what I am going to sign is the product of a well-studied thing," he added.

Perez has maintained that his opinion did not grant a sovereign guarantee to the Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan (CBK) project.

He insisted that it was jailed President Joseph Estrada who had fully approved the Impsa power deal.

He said that it was wrong to infer that his signature could supersede the signature of Estrada.

"The legal opinion did not create the contract. The (power deal contract) is already there," he added.

What he did when he assumed his post was to render an opinion on the "government undertaking" that the National Power Corp. (NPC) would perform its obligations under the Impsa deal.

FIRST OF MLSA GOODIES

RP buys 500 body armors from US

By Martin P. Marfil

THE US government has provided 500 body armor units to the Philippine Army, the first procurement under the controversial Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA).

"This is the first . . . goodies from the US government through the MLSA. We are trying to prove that the MLSA is an effective facility to make procurements for our troops," said Maj. Gen. Cicero Castellano, AFP vice chief for logistics.

However, Castellano refused to give other details, including the cost of the procurement.

Under the agreement, anything acquired by a party would be paid for in cash, equipment or services commensurate to the amount of items procured.

The MLSA has been described by the Department of National Defense as a "low-key, accounting" document over protests from lawmakers who maintained that it was treaty and needed to be ratified by the Senate.

Vice President Teofisto Guingona had even warned that the MLSA would pave the way for the involvement of Filipino troops in US-initiated wars.

Despite their protests, the document was signed Nov. 21 in Camp Aguinaldo by AFP deputy chief of staff for plans, Rear Admiral Ernesto de Leon, and US Col. Matias Velasco in Camp Aguinaldo.

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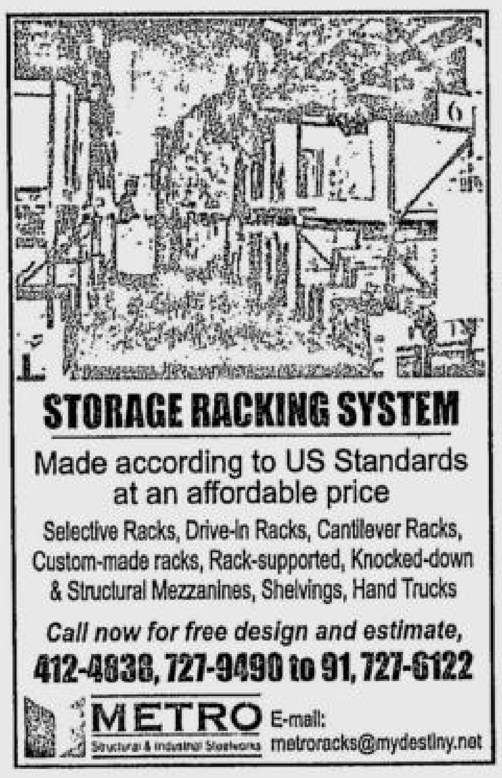

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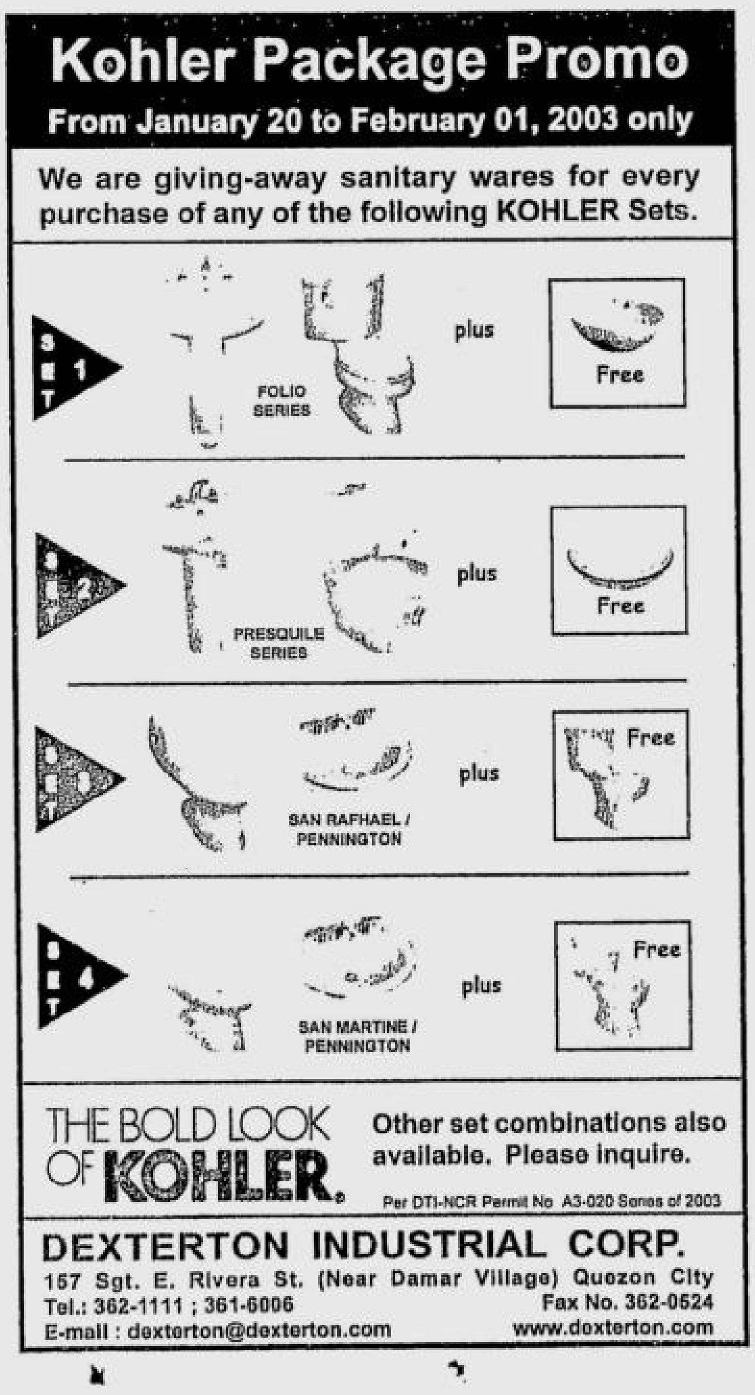

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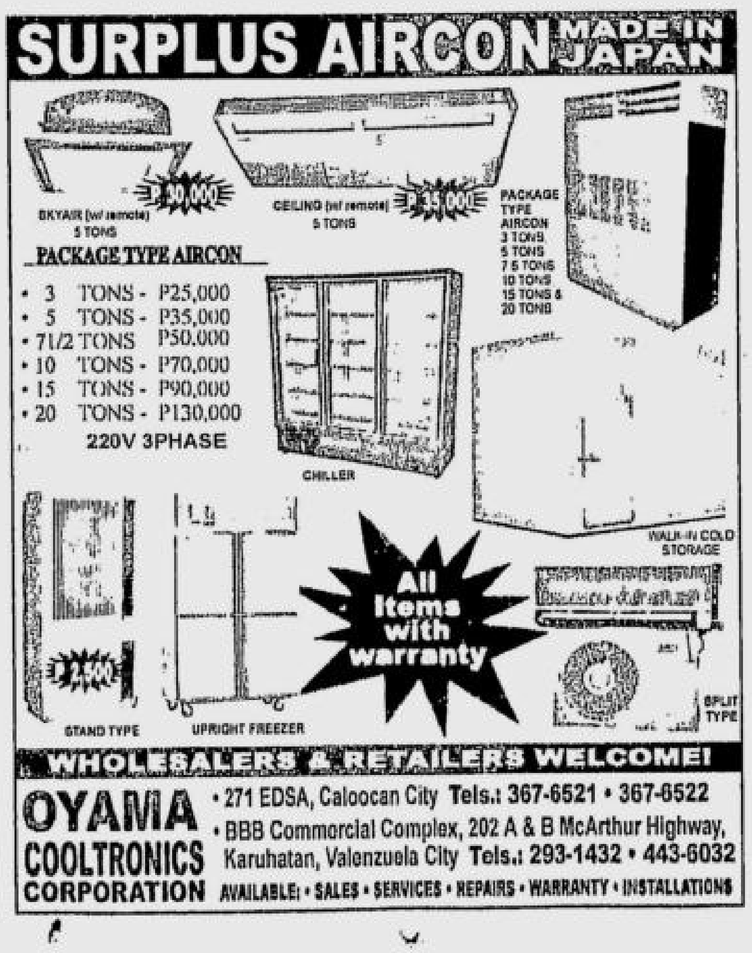
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LIBYAN-SPONSORED REUNION

Feuding MNLF factions unite

COTABATO CITY—Libya has apparently succeeded in reuniting the splintered Moro National Liberation Front.

Alfatah Abubakar, spokesperson of the MNLF's collective leadership called Council of 15, reported that top representatives of various factions agreed in a meeting on Monday to end all their bickering.

The groups signed a draft declaration of unity for the full implementation of MNLF's 1996 Final Peace Agreement with the government, Abubakar said. The declaration will be presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo, before a select delegation travels to Tripoli in February to meet with Libyan leader Moammar Ghadafi.

Officially dubbed Meeting of Muslim Leaders, the "unity meeting" was called upon the initiative of the Libyan government in consultation with the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) peace panel, and held at the Simeo (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization)-Inotech building in Diliman.

It was to be a consultation with the different factions within the MNLF on three main subjects: organization and leadership, future plans, and the agenda of the Tripoli delegation.

The meeting was attended by representatives from four groups—the Nur Misuari-led faction, the group of former Autonomous Region Legislative Assembly Speaker Alvarez Isnaji, the Islamic Command Council, and the 15-member executive council under ARMM (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao) Gov. Parouk Hussin.

Libyan Ambassador Salem Adam acted as mediator.

In his opening statement, Adam made it clear that Ghadafi wanted the leadership crisis in the MNLF settled immediately. "We also want to unite the MNLF and the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) in the future," Adam said.

One leadership

Abubakar said Libya saw a return to its original structure—"under one organization and one leadership"—as the only way the MNLF could revive its bargaining power.

This remark was initially construed as a reference to the leadership of Nur Misuari, former ARMM governor, who is currently detained by the military on charges of rebellion.

But, Adam stressed, "The reality is that (Misuari) may stay in jail until after 2004." Thus, Libya rejected that portion of the declaration naming Misuari as "the sole and legitimate representative of the Bangsamoro people."

It was agreed that vice chair Hatimil Hassan would act as chair of the united MNLF until Misuari was freed. Some members of the Misuari group refused to sign the declaration, and left before the meeting formally ended.

Even so, Hussin said, the meeting was "historic," in the sense that "it brought together old comrades in arms."

Dissenter

Hussin is one of four "candidates" to replace Misuari as MNLF chairman. The other three are Alvarez Isnaji, Sulu Gov. Yusof Jikiri, and Cotabato City Mayor Muslimin Sema.

Ghadzali Jaafar, vice chair for political affairs of the MILF, reportedly hailed the MNLF's reunification.

A dissenting voice was that of Maradeka spokesperson Nash Pangandapun, who accused Libya of "interferering with MNLF's leadership issue."

Adam's explanation of Libya's position underscored the urgency of presenting a solid front: "Nobody (is) saying Misuari has no more followers. We simply do not want to waste time. (Libya does) not want to deliver arms and guns—it's not the time for that. This is the time for unity." *Charlie C. Senase, PDI Mindanao Bureau, with Arlyn dela Cruz*

Erap lawyers complain of suppression evidence

By Volt Contreras

LAWYERS of deposed President Joseph Estrada yesterday suggested state prosecutors suppressed evidence, claiming the government attorneys skipped crucial segments of the paper trail which sought to pin ownership of the infamous Jose Velarde account to their client.

In a sharp retort, Senior State Prosecutor Alex Padilla said his panel had indeed come across certain documents relative to the Velarde account. But "we suspect (them) to be manufactured, that's why we're not presenting them" in court.

The spurious documents, Padilla said, "are apparently part of a cover-up, and will be the subject of another case we are now studying" for filing upon the conclusion of the Estrada plunder trial.

Estrada lawyer Prospero Crescini noted that the prosecution merely subpoenaed monthly "statements of account" showing how the Velarde funds were withdrawn—and not documents detailing how the account was opened at Equitable/PCIBank Binondo branch.

He gave this view yesterday after another EPCIBank executive disclosed how the Velarde account, opened Aug. 26, 1999, was drained until it was closed Nov. 13, 2000.

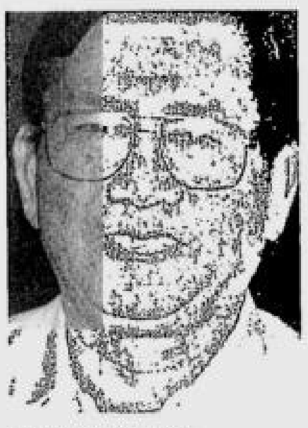
"Isn't it surprising? They subpoenaed only the statements of accounts, not (documents showing) who opened the account, like specimen signatures," he told reporters.

"So you can see suppression of evidence," Crescini said. "And evidence willfully suppressed is presumed to be adverse to the party suppressing the same."

Old classmates reunite

By Michael Lim Ubac

DAVIDE


DATUMANONG

EXPECT memories to awaken when, after so many years, classmates at the University of the Philippines College of Law meet again.

Newly appointed Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong thought yesterday's regular meeting of the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) would be just one of those things.

He attended the meeting held at the Supreme Court in place of Hernando Perez, who served as JBC ex oficio chair during his tenure as justice secretary.

To Datumanong's pleasant surprise, the meeting was an occasion to be reunited with a college buddy and to recall the old days.

According to Sen. Francisco Pangilinan, the Senate's representative to the nine-member body that recommends replacements for vacancies in the judiciary, Datumanong's welcomers were led by no less than Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., the JBC chair.

But the warm welcome was just the beginning.

Davide took a trip down memory lane and told JBC members that Datumanong was his classmate at the UP law school, from which they both graduated in 1959.

In fact, he said, Datumanong was his seatmate in most, if not all, of his law classes.

Regardless of whether the seat rows were reckoned horizontally or diagonally, the two men always found themselves seated next to each other by virtue of the alphabetical order enforced then.

"That was the seating arragement during the four years that we stayed at UP Law," Pangilinan quoted Davide as saying.

Asked to describe the chemistry between Davide and Datumanong, now both 67, Pangilinan said: "They were at ease with each other. They talked like they were old buddies."

They recalled old times, updated each other on their personal lives, and even cracked jokes, the senator added.

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I have nothing in the US, Lacson insists

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By Gerald G. Lacuarta

ZERO assets and zero bank accounts.

That, according to Sen. Panfilo Lacson, is what he has in the United States and what arms supplier Blanquita Pelaez and her lawyer will most probably find in connection with a $3 million default judgment against the senator in a California court.

"If they find anything, they can have it," Lacson said yesterday, in reply to a statement made by Pelaez's lawyer, Rodel Rodis, that the latter would subpoena the records of his bank accounts in the US to enforce the Jan. 10 judgment of the California Superior Court.

Judge Julie Conger had ordered Lacson to pay Pelaez $3,031,262 representing the balance, plus damages and interest, of the handcuffs contract that Lacson, the then Philippine National Police chief had allegedly refused to pay.

But Lacson said Rodis would be doing him a favor by trying to find his assets and bank accounts as this would clear him of the allegations made by military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus that he owned real estate and multimillion-dollar bank accounts in the US.

"Because I'm sure they will find nothing and that would clearly establish that these people who made the accusations are lying," Lacson said.

In her declaration in support of the default judgment, Pelaez cited an INQUIRER report quoting the US Federal Bureau of Investigation as saying that Lacson has "managed to stash approximately $500 million in US banks."

Lacson said he was willing to sign a waiver for any assets that Pelaez and her counsel can find in the US or anywhere else abroad.

According to Lacson, the only real estate he owned in the US was a townhouse in San Diego, California, worth $169,000. But that property was now gone as he sold it in 1997.

Lacson said the only bank account he had, one in the Bank of America, was already closed with an ending balance of $83.

Lacson said he would go to California before March 5 to appeal the first court order declaring him in default in the cases filed by Pelaez.

But Rodin, speaking in TV forum "Strictly Politics" at the ANC Channel on Jan. 21, said the mere filing of the appeal does not stay the enforcement of the judgment.

"I do not believe they will prevail in the appeal but they certainly have the right to file," Rodin said.

For his appeal, Lacson has sought the assistance of Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo since the case stemmed from a contract involving the government which he represented then as the PNP chief.

In his letter to Benipayo, Lacson said his decision not to approve the full payment for the handcuffs ordered by the PNP from B.H. Pelaez Enterprises was in the interest of the government and taxpayers.

"Had I authorized the payment for the handcuffs, I may have cases pending now at the Sandiganbayan for graft," Lacson said.

The P16.5 million contract was for the purchase of 41,297 pairs of handcuffs from the US-based Smith & Wesson, which was exclusively represented in the Philippines by Pelaez's firm.

Bankers feeling pinch of dirty-money sanctions

By Christine O. Avendaño

A NUMBER of foreign banks have refused to service Philippine transactions because the country remains on the list of nations not complying with international standards in the fight against money laundering.

This was disclosed by Bankers' Association of the Philippines president Cesar Virata yesterday at a House hearing on a bill that seeks to amend the two-year-old Anti-Money Laundering Law (AML).

"We have experienced already the withdrawal of a number of banks from Philippine transactions," Virata told the hearing held jointly by the House committees on banks and financial intermediaries, economic affairs and justice.

Virata made the statement as he, along with Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura, pressed Congress to immediately pass amendments to the AML. They noted that the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force would review on Feb. 12 how the Philippines was faring in comparison with the set standards.

Virata declined to reveal to reporters the foreign banks that have withdrawn from servicing Philippine accounts or even how many they were.

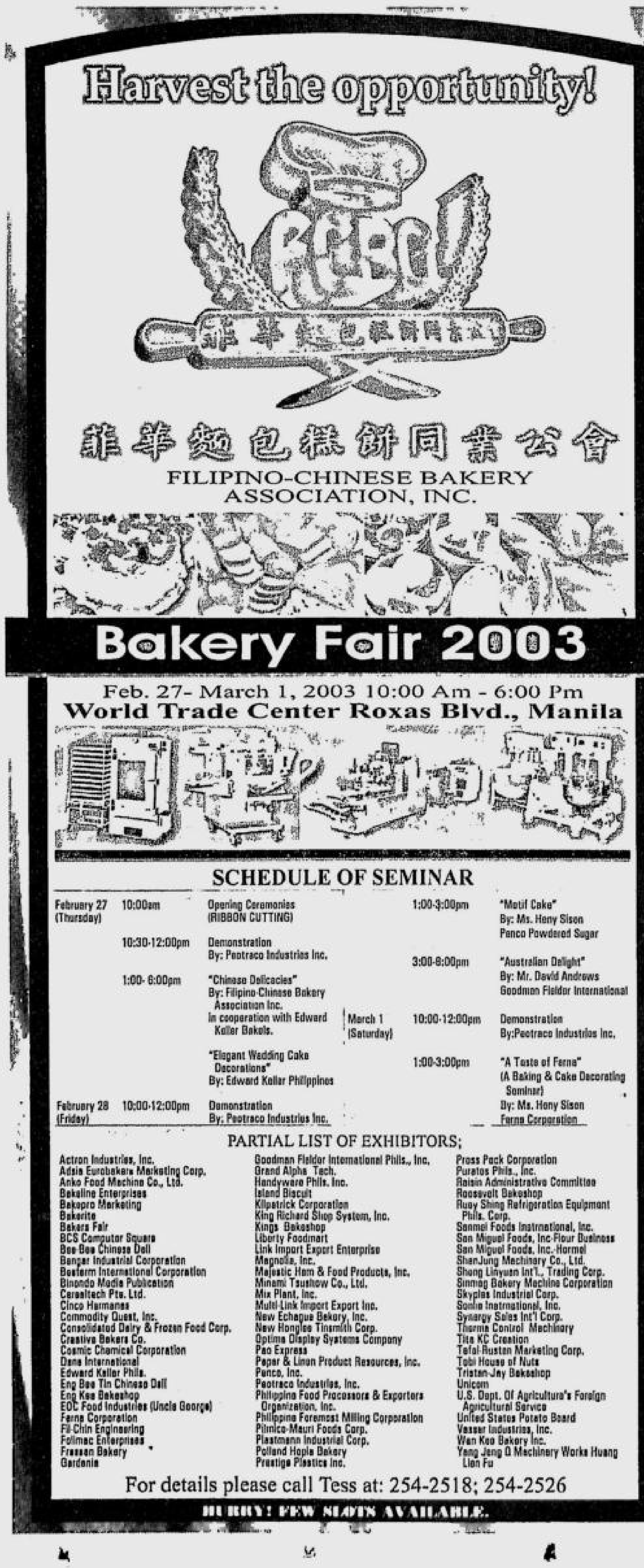
He said the banks were also subject to the AML and that they too were "penalized if they don't follow the know-your-customer-rule."

"We are in the non-cooperative list. Therefore (foreign banks) require who is this importer, what is the importer... every detail, " he said.

Virata also said that if Manila failed to meet the standards, overseas Filipino workers "will have difficulties in remitting funds to the Philippines."

This was echoed by Buenaventura, who said OFWs would be adversely affected by legislation delays. He said that while the FATP set the standards and determined the counter measures, the enforcement of sanctions was in the hands of FATP individual country-members such as the United States, Hong Kong, Canada and Singapore.

An estimated 7 million OFWs work in those countries as well as in other areas in the Middle East and Oceania. They send home at least $8 billion a year to family and friends, contributing half a percentage point or more to the country's annual gross national product.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February 27 (Thursday)	10:00am	Opening Ceremonies (RIBBON CUTTING)		1:00-3:00pm	"Motif Cake" By: Ms. Hony Sison Penco Powdered Sugar
	10:30-12:00pm	Demonstration By: Peotraco Industries Inc.		3:00-6:00pm	"Australian Delight" By: Mr. David Andrews Goodman Fielder International
	1:00- 6:00pm	"Chinese Delicacies" By: Filipino-Chinese Bakery Association Inc. In cooperation with Edward Keller Bakels.	March 1 (Saturday)	10:00-12:00pm	Demonstration By:Peotraco Industries Inc.
		"Elegant Wedding Cake Decorations" By: Edward Keller Philippines		1:00-3:00pm	"A Taste of Ferna" (A Baking & Cake Decorating Seminar) By: Ms. Hony Sison Ferna Corporation
February 28 (Friday)	10:00-12:00pm	Demonstration By: Peotraco Industries Inc.			

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Tighter gun control to cost gov't P12.5M in license fees

By TJ Burgonio

BIG loopholes in the current system of issuing gun licenses and permits to carry firearms outside of residence (PTCFOR) are more urgent considerations than the estimated P12.5 million that the national police stands to lose from the 15-day suspension of the processes.

Senior Supt. Geary Barias, police director for the Firearms and Explosives Division (FED) yesterday admitted that the present system allowed for "non-existent" applicants and "spuriously produced" documents, such as drug and neuro-testing results.

The suspension followed the uproar over the killing of an Ateneo law graduate.

Barias downplayed the projected loss. "Once the suspension is lifted," he told reporters, "(P12.5 million) will be easy to recoup."

The FED, considered the Philippine National Police's top money-making unit, collected some P300 million last year from firearms licensing alone. It issues over 1,000 licenses daily.

PNP chief Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. earlier ordered the suspension so that the FED could review existing procedures and draw up a "more stringent" licensing system.

The order was prompted by the fatal shooting of Jose Ramon Llamas, 26, on Jan. 10 after a traffic altercation in Pasay City. The incident renewed calls for stricter gun control in the country.

Admitting to the loopholes, Barias said he would, first of all, propose that applicants for licenses and permits be required to appear at the FED in person. He said he had received reports that "some" applications were processed through proxies.

Fool-proof

"We'd like a system in which we can be sure that the applicant for a license and/or permit is the same person who bought the firearm, or that such a person really exists," Barias said.

Barias, who will head the review committee, said he would further propose that the Department of Health monitor accredited drug-testing and neuro-testing centers, since he had also been informed that applicants rarely showed up at the centers, and instead managed to obtain fake certifications which they present to the FED.

The Department of Interior and Local Government likewise announced yesterday that it was willing to extend amnesty to owners of unregistered firearms.

Interior Secretary Joey Lina said he was waiting for Malacañang's approval of an amnesty program.

Lina said that of some 328,000 loose firearms in the country, 190,000 were previously registered, but had not been re-registered.

Loose firearm

"Once an owner fails to register his gun," he explained, "it becomes a loose firearm. Then he cannot register it anymore. An amnesty would encourage these owners to come out."

Lina said the government could raise funds from the re-registration.

In the last 10 years, Lina noted, 12,233 firearms were involved in the commission of crimes. He said police records showed that 85 percent of these were unlicensed.

The PNP has streamlined the registartion process, Lina said, cutting it down from nine to two days. Payments of license fees are now coursed through the banks to stem corruption, he added.

Lina also announced that 1,000 confiscated firearms would be destroyed next week. About 7,000 loose firearms were confiscated last year, he said, but some of them are reportedly still being used as court evidence. The police has kept the high-powered ones for its own use. *With Dona Pazzibugan*

Canada is top immigration destination

OTTAWA—Immigration-friendly Canada has a higher proportion of foreign-born residents now than at any time in the past 70 years, and they are more likely to have come from Asia, including the Philippines, than from Europe.

Census data from 2001 released on Tuesday showed 5.4 million people, or 18.4 percent of the population—including citizens and immigrants but not temporary residents—were born outside the country, up from 17.4 percent in 1996.

It was the highest level since the 22 percent registered in 1931, following a surge of immigration to settle the western provinces.

The Canadian census showed a heavy shift to Asia from Europe as a source of immigrants in the last 30 to 40 years.

Some 90.5 percent of those who immigrated before 1961 came from Europe, and only 3.2 percent from Asia. In the last decade, 19.5 percent were from from Europe and 58.2 percent from Asia.

China was the greatest source of immigrants in the past decade, at 10.8 percent, followed by India, 8.5 percent; Philippines, 6.7 percent; and Hong Kong, 6.5 percent. *Reuters*

Asia-Pacific dental meet slated April 24 to May 1

THE PHILIPPINES will host this year the 25th Asia-Pacific Dental Congress on April 24 to May 1 at the Philippine International Convention Center.

The event, hosted by the Philippine Dental Association, will be held in conjunction with the association's 95th annual convention and scientific session.

For the right to host the event, the PDA beat 24 other member countries of the Asia-Pacific Dental Federation (APDF/APRO) which is an Asia-Pacific Regional Organization of the World Dental Federation (FDI).

The 25th APDC has for its theme "Quality Dentistry and Modern Technology."

Speakers from the United States, Europe and Southeast Asia will present latest dental health techniques and trends during the week-long Continuing Education and Scientific Programs. Trade and commercial exhibitors will showcase the latest in dental equipment, materials and technology in a specially constructed exhibit hall by the PICC management.

Dean Diampo J. Lim, general chairman of the 25th APDC, leads the event together with Dr. Luis D. Uy, president of Philippine Dental Association and Dr. Arsenio C. Donesa, president-elect and APDC deputy chairman. They are assisted by Dr. Jesus C. Tumaneng, APDF president-Elect, Dr. Sofronio San Juan, secretary general, Dr. Primo E. Gonzales, adviser and consultant.

"We are leaving no stone unturned to make this congress an invaluable opportunity of professional growth and industry development for all the foreign and local delegates as well as accompanying persons and guests," said Dr. Lim. "The scientific programs and activities will greatly contribute to the progress and development of dentistry in the Asia-Pacific region. This in turn will help improve the promotion of oral health, prevention of oral diseases and clinical intervention brought about by oral diseases.

PAMILYANG PILIPINO

SOLEMNITIES inside the PICC for the opening of the World Meeting of Families clash with a noise barrage outside led by the women's militant group, Gabriela, protesting the exclusion of families outside the Church's definition. JESS YUSON

Anti-poverty program GMA's 'living legacy'

From page A1

the time she steps down in 2004, she would have left a legacy of a strong economy.

"A living legacy," she said of the anti-poverty program she also launched yesterday.

During a visit here on Tuesday, she said that in the last 17 months of her presidency, she would implement several reforms.

In Jabonga, Agusan del Norte, the President launched an anti-poverty program that would go beyond her administration.

Dubbed the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (Kalahi), the program is funded by a P9-billion assistance from the World Bank.

"This is part of the strategy of the President to solve the problem of poverty within a decade," Interior Secretary Joey Lina said in a briefing in Malacañang.

Lina was referring to the President's vow to upon assuming office in 2001 to eradicate poverty in a decade.

Living legacy

"This is a living legacy, and I hope this ushers positive transformation," she said before a crowd of about 20,000 in Jabonga where she had proceeded after Davao City. There, she also reiterated her Dec. 30 declaration that she would no longer run for president.

Her anti-poverty program plans to infuse P9.3 billion into the country's poorest barangays, the funding to continue until 2008.

"This is part of the strategy of the President to solve the problem of poverty within a decade," Interior Secretary Joey Lina said in a briefing in Malacañang.

He was referring to the President's vow upon assuming office in 2001 to eradicate poverty in a decade.

Target: 1.5-M households

The Kalahi program targets 5,107 poor barangays in 197 municipalities of 40 provinces. About 1.5 million poor households are the target direct beneficiaries.

The barangay councils themselves have to identify infrastructure projects to avail of the Kalahi funds.

The government said such infrastructure projects would not only provide jobs but also improve impoverished conditions in the barangays.

Ms Macapagal earlier said the Kalahi program was assured of funding for the next five years.

Of the P9.3 billion total project cost, the World Bank would finance P5.1 billion (or 55 per cent); the government P2.3 billion (25 percent); and local government units, P1.9 billion (20 per cent).

5 phases

The fund release would come in five phases.

Phase 1 starts this month, involving P334 million covering 199 barangays in 11 municipalities.

Under Kalahi, Jabonga, Agusan del Norte, stands to get P3.5 million per year for three years.

Phase 2 starts in July 2003, P2.75 billion for 1,637 barangays in 59 municipalities; Phase 3 starts in January 2004, P2.8 billion for 1,667 barangays in 66 municipalities;

Phase 4 starts in January 2005, P2.67 billion for 1,583 barangays in 61 municipalities; and Phase 5 starts in January 2005, involving P672 million for 400 urban poor barangays.

"I will spend a lot of time pushing with legislations and asking people to join in this structural (reforms) campaign," Ms Macapagal said in Davao City.

'NO IF, AND OR VAT'

'Equal oppression or equal exemption'

By Cynthia D. Balana

"EQUAL exemption or equal oppression."

Professionals should also get a reprieve from the proposed 10-percent value added tax (VAT) if banks were to be exempted, Sen. Ralph Recto said yesterday.

"Real Shylocks" and "reel Shylocks" should get the same treatment, said Recto, chair of the Senate committee on ways and means, making an example out of the Shakespearean character, a money lender.

"Banks, which are in the money business, say they get lost in the labyrinth of tax laws. You can just imagine how Greek the same laws are to actors," the senator said.

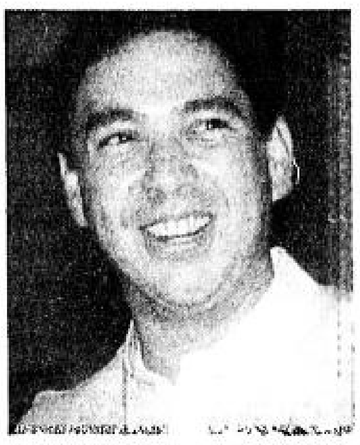
He pointed out that government would forfeit more potential revenue by waiving the VAT on financial intermediaries than by waiving the VAT on professionals, entertainers and athletes.

Recto quoted a position paper of the Department of Finance which said annual tax loss from scrapping the VAT on banks and non-banks stood at P12.8 billion in the very least.

On the other hand, the same paper said, government would give up only P8.6 billion annually, should it defer the implementation of VAT on professionals.

"If banks escaped the VAT again," Recto said, "this is the second time in less than three months that they would be beneficiaries of pro-banking legislation."

Under the recently signed Special Purpose Asset Vehicle (SPAV) law, he said, banks could get as much as P70 billion in tax exemption through the removal of so-called friction costs.



RECTO: Real and reel Shylocks shout get same treatment.

In a related development, Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta said a warning aired by two large organizations of physicians should prompt the government to rethink the tax scheme.

Oreta was referring to the statement issued by the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) and the Philippine College of Physicians (PCP) that they were poised to pass on the VAT burden to patients, in the form of higher professional fees.

She also announced that she was co-authoring a resolution introduced by Senate Minority Leader Vicente Sotto III seeking to investigate the effects of the VAT on the public.

Vicencio, 68

ROMEO T. Vicencio, architect by profession and artist at heart, died on Monday at the age of 68.

He is survived by children Paolo and Cynthia, Catherine and Vlad, wife Marilou, and grandchildren JC, Justin, John and Patricia.

His remains lie at the Funeraria Nacional on G. Araneta Avenue. Interment will be on Thursday at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 1 p.m. Mass.

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Key reform

EDITORIAL

LOST amid the din of the contentious public debate over amending the Constitution was a key reform program announced by President Macapagal-Arroyo at last Tuesday's commemoration of the Edsa II anniversary.

The President announced that she had put aside P2.5 billion to finance the total computerization of the counting and tabulation of the votes in the 2004 elections. The crowd at the shrine recognized the importance of the decision and gave her the longest applause for a speech in which she unwrapped a package of nine other projects designed to strengthen the hand of her government in the campaign against corruption. She said computerization would allow the accurate and quick counting of votes.

This project is a concrete translation, backed by funds and political will, of one of her three-point pledge last Dec. 30, when she announced that she was withdrawing from the 2004 elections. She pledged then that she would "ensure free elections" in 2004. Last Monday at the Edsa Shrine, she said, "We must ensure the election of the people's real choices. We must protect the votes of those who run on the strength of their public service rather than on the force of their private wealth."

The other elements in the package include reforms seeking to transform the Bureau of Internal Revenue into an autonomous authority, legislation to allow the Office of the Ombudsman to engage the services of private lawyers, and an order to the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission to create an investigation unit that will receive reports from citizens and conduct intensive lifestyle checks on public officials.

The computerization project demands close monitoring. Previous plans to computerize the counting with new technology have failed after they were blocked inside the Commission on Elections by commissioners who raised questions about priorities, such as which should come first, cleaning up the roll of voters or installing a computerized counting system.

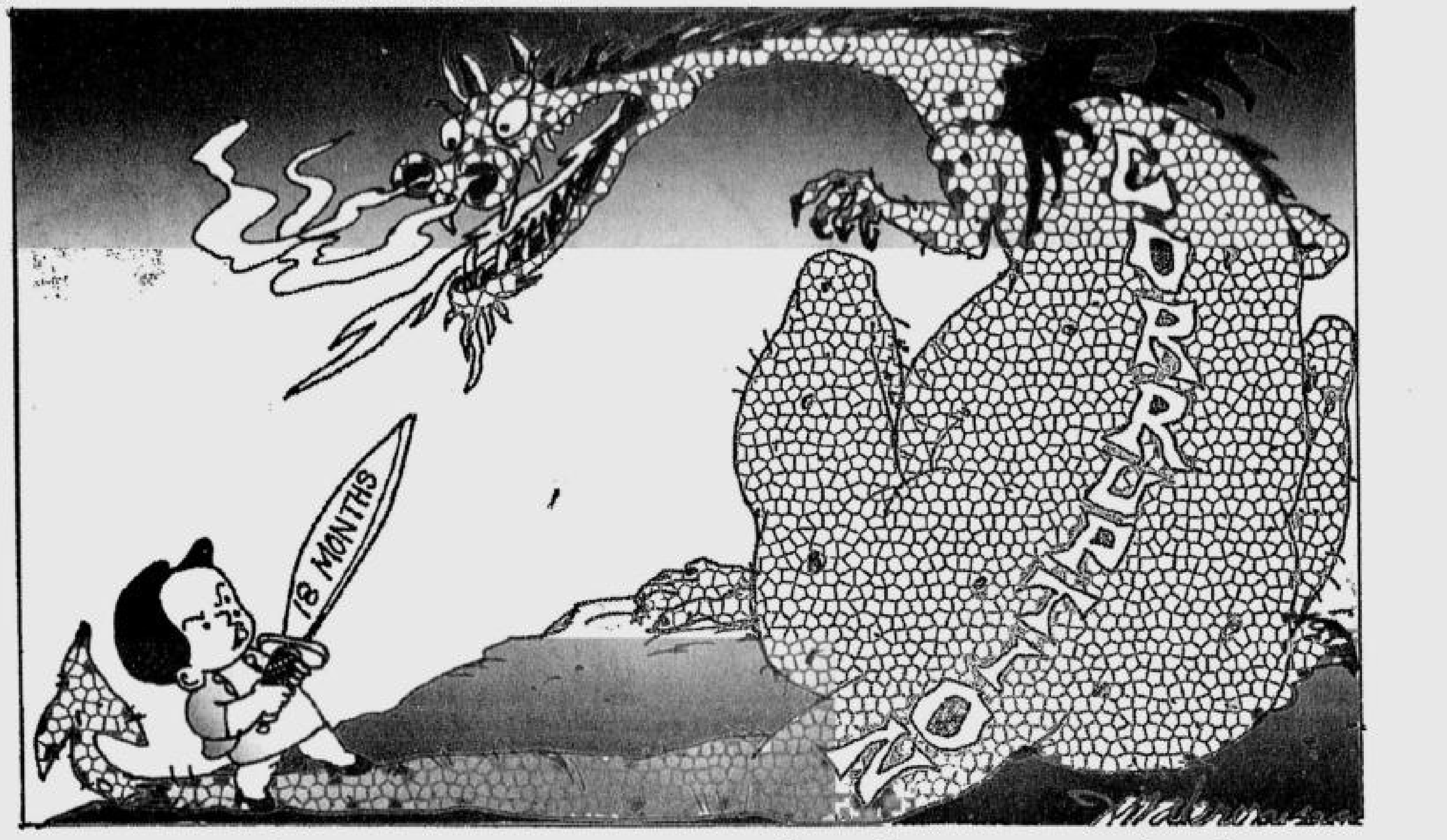
With her announcement, backed by the assurance that funds are available for the purpose, the President has made clear her own priority. But since the Comelec is an independent constitutional body, she will have to use all her persuasive powers with the commissioners to make them withdraw their objections. That will be the test of whether she can translate a pledge into action.

For the past three weeks since her dramatic Dec. 30 declaration of withdrawal from the presidential race, the President has put forward a series of concrete proposals, including the financial reforms spelled out at the Philippine Stock Exchange, the revival of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council as the mechanism for forging multi-party consensus on a legislative agenda, and the anti-corruption campaign. From this series of initiatives, the public now has something by which to measure the implementation of reform measures.

Tracking these initiatives is more important than being trapped in unproductive speculations over political scenarios, scandal-mongering and guessing who is ahead in the presidential race. It is pointless and a waste of time to speculate on the relative chances of presidential aspirants when all we are seeing are shadows and nothing has crystallized in the political landscape that has been redrawn by the President's withdrawal from the 2004 presidential race.

Among all the initiatives so far announced, the election computerization project promises to be the most lasting legacy of the Macapagal presidency. It should be a monument to political will given that since 1906 our elections have been conducted by hand. Modern democracies have computerized their counting process and many developing countries, including those in equatorial Africa, have modernized their electoral counting systems. On the other hand, despite our boast about being an experienced democracy, our election counting process still remains in the era of the carabao-drawn sled. In most countries, election results are known in a matter of days. In our process, it takes weeks before the Comelec finishes the official count.

Delays facilitate cheating. Computerized technology reduces the opportunity for cheating. If President Macapagal can replace the process with quick-count technology, she will leave a historic legacy when she steps down from the presidency.



Why doesn't GMA gov't clarify Impsa deal?

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

THE SENATORS are missing the point in the investigation of the Impsa contract. They, the witnesses and people arguing for and against the Estrada and Macapagal administrations waste too much time and saliva on who signed what in the Impsa deal and whether or not there is a government guarantee.

The crux of the matter are the accusations of bribery in the approval of the deal. And circumstantial evidence seem to bolster the suspicion. Rep. Mark Jimenez said he gave $2 million to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez through a Hong Kong bank. Sen. Panfilo Lacson said a total of $14 million were distributed to various persons in the Macapagal administration and to the President's own Lualhati Foundation. And former President Estrada testified under oath that he was offered by Jimenez $14 million to approve the deal. Shouldn't the first order of business be to open the identified Hong Kong bank account and the Laulhati Foundation? That ought to be the first reaction of the innocent wrongly accused.

On the alleged "sovereign guarantee" which clinched the deal, Erap showed me documents when he was interviewed at his detention suite (which is why I missed my deadline for yesterday's issue, for which I apologize to the many readers who inquired why I had no column yesterday), showing very clearly that his administration did not give a sovereign guarantee.

There was no such guarantee in the original contract, in the Gaca, or in any of the other supplements. And for good measure, the Gaca issued on Dec. 28, 2000 by the Department of Finance signed by Secretary Jose Pardo, had this remark: "For the avoidance of doubt, it is understood that nothing in this letter agreement shall be construed so as to convert the Government Undertaking (the Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan power project) to a direct guarantee by the Government of the obligations of CBK to the lenders under the Omnibus Agreement. Neither shall this letter agreement be construed to increase or expand the obligations of the Republic of the Philippines under the Government Undertaking dated July 12, 1999."

And Erap said that when Jimenez offered him the $14 million, "*Meron pong* $14 million *dito* for projects of the Office of the President," he replied, "*Wala pa ring* sovereign guarantee."

Since he rejected the offer, where did the $14 million go? Erap wanted to know. Because Perez, only two days into the Macapagal administration, gave his Department of Justice opinion giving the desired guarantee, the suspicion is that people in the new regime got it, bolstered by Jimenez's allegation that Perez himself got $2 million which he himself had sent to the Hong Kong bank.

Perez denies this and said he merely copied the unsigned opinion of Erap's own justice secretary, Artemio Tuquero, and signed it, but with the following inserted on Page 2: "...the Republic of the Philippines has validly and effectively consented to the transfer and assignment to the Lenders of all of CBK's rights under the Government Undertaking."

This short phrase is worth $2 million? That, according to Perez's accusers, is the indirect "sovereign guarantee." It guarantees the bank lenders that in case the National Power Corp. cannot pay its obligations to Impsa, the Republic of the Philippines will pay them.

That is no guarantee, says Perez. It is only what is called a "letter of comfort" asked by the banks before they would release proceeds of the loans to Impsa. It does not in any way obligate the government to pay the unpaid debts of Napocor.

And legal experts seem to agree. Lawyer Raul J. Palabrica, the INQUIRER's ombudsman, said in a news analysis:

"Under our laws, any agreement by a person to assume the obligations of another person in case the latter fails to comply with his commitments must be clear and unequivocal. It cannot be presumed or read between the lines of a contract. The reason is simple: because a guarantee imposes a heavy burden on the guarantor, it is only fair that the assumption of liability and parameters of the assumed obligation are spelled out in unmistakable terms.

"There is nothing in the Perez opinion that states that the Philippine government has guaranteed the payment of the obligations of Napocor to Impsa or CBK. Like the Tuquero opinion, the Perez opinion limited itself to stating that all agreements entered into by Napocor for the power plants are in accordance with Philippine laws."

As to the July 12, 1999 letter of Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu which reads in part, "In order to facilitate these investments, we hereby confirm the obligations of NPC...carry the full faith credit of the Republic of the Philippines and the Republic...will see to it that NPC shall be liable to discharge at all times such obligations as they fall due." Palabrica said it is only a "best efforts" statement. "There is nothing in the provisions of the contract documents that said that if Napocor fails or reneges on its commitments to Impsa, the government will...make good Napocor's unfulfilled obligations."

During last Monday's Kapihan sa Manila, Sen. Serge Osmeña III and Justice Undersecretary Claudio Teehankee III took a lot of time showing various documents and arguing whether or not there is a guarantee, but until now that question is hazy. In spite of the many supplements to the original contract, that issue was never clarified.

Now then, to remove all doubts, why does not the government issue a clarification that "there is no sovereign guarantee to Impsa and CBK lenders and that this government will not pay Napocor's obligations if the latter cannot pay it." That should settle the matter once and for all.

Baby and bath water

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

CORAZON Aquino says she favors a constitutional convention over a constituent assembly because "it will keep out the politicians." Or so according to her spokesperson, Lourdes Siytangco.

Not really.

It is better than a constituent assembly only in the degree to which it will keep out the politicians. Or more accurately, the traditional politicians, or *trapos*, as we now so aptly refer to them. Clearly, convening the House of Representives as an assembly to decide how this country will be run is like putting vampires in charge of the blood bank. The fact that the House voted for Charter change almost to a man or woman—only two voted against it—despite surveys showing the public almost to a man or woman does not want it at this time must show not that they know better than the public but that they know worse. They could not have worn self-interest more plainly than if they pinned it on their chest.

But a constitutional convention by itself doesn't naturally guarantee keeping out the *trapos*. As Joker Arroyo perceptively noted, the proposed timing of the con-con, which is simultaneous with the 2004 elections, guarantees that there will be an additional 300 to 400 positions up for grabs. That will mean all sorts of horse-trading within and between parties on who should run for the regular positions—mayors, congressmen, etc.—and who for the con-con. With the likelihood that the weaker candidates would be fielded in the con-con. The con-con could end up "being manned by second stringers." That means *trapos* who do not have the saving grace of endearing themselves to the public.

More importantly, there is the past to show that keeping out the *trapos* would not necessarily be the outcome of a con-con.

The 1970 con-con to begin with was quite unlike today's Cha-cha in one respect, which is that there was a public clamor for it. While it originated from above, particularly from Marcos' camp, with the idea of giving Marcos a loophole for dodging term limits—a president could only have two terms, following the American system—it soon gripped the public imagination. The radicals wanted it because they felt the 1935 Constitution was a colonial document, forged for the Commonwealth, and carried the stamp, or spirit, of the American imperial design. They wanted a more nationalist one reflecting Filipino interests. The liberals, or reformists, wanted it because they felt it was the last hope of liberal democracy. The elections the year before, which saw the first Filipino president to win a second term, who was Marcos, was marred by guns, goons and gold. The future of presidential elections lay in peril—it promised only higher, probably insupportable, levels of fraud and violence.

Everyone's concern then was to make the con-con elections "politics-free." As a result of public pressure, the Comelec ruled that elective and appointive officials and members of the political parties would not be eligible to run for the con-con. I don't know if the same thing can be done today. Certainly, Arroyo's analysis of the current political mood suggests it will be hard. That is not to speak of GMA's retinue of appointive officials who stand to be pried loose from power after she goes. But to go back, even that proscription in the past did not prevent the con-con elections from being invaded by the *trapos*.

What did the trick was a provision that said the ban did not apply to members of the family or to the personal campaign staff of the candidates. The *trapos*, or indeed out-and-out warlords, who teemed in the countryside then, lost no time fielding their sons and daughters and proxy candidates. The result was that although the con-con elections managed to produce some sterling names—among them, Voltaire Garcia, Jose Mari Velez, Raul Manglapus, Raul Roco, Teofisto Guingona, Aquilino Pimentel, Bobbit Sanchez, Romy Capulong, Edgardo Angara, Alejandro Lichauco, Sonny Alvarez, and Augusto Cesar Espiritu—they produced for the most part more of the same. The latter swiftly flocked to Marcos' side, persuaded in no small way by payola, and went on after martial law to finish the job they started before it.

None of this is to say that we should not contemplate, or debate, Charter change. All of this is to say that we should be very, very wary in going about Charter change. It's not just a question of whether a con-con or a constituent assembly is better, it is, first of all a question of when to change the Charter and why. The when I have always answered with: Not until you've carried out a massive education campaign, or elicited open and passionate debate on the subject. Otherwise, it isn't giving the public what it needs, it's ramming through what you want.

The why is infinitely more critical. You don't change a charter unless you have a compelling need to. If the burning necessity is there, you won't even have to argue the relative merits of a con-con versus a constituent assembly. The 1997 Charter change came from the obdurate need to replace the one that came from the loins of martial law, and served the purposes of martial law. As a result, it did not greatly matter that the framers of the Constitution were appointed or elected. The vision was there. And I personally think the framers of that Constitution did not let us down, notwithstanding their excesses, as critics like to point out. The current Constitution has the virtue of being staunchly libertarian and democratic, something we need now more than ever. You can't just throw that away because you're worried movie actors and basketball players will look more *pogi* than *trapos* to the voters.

There is a difference between the baby and the bath water. We rush into this, and we'll be wondering where our kid went.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

No ambition to be PM—JDV

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I HAD a brief conversation with Senate President Franklin Drilon yesterday about the resolution he authored and which was signed by 13 other senators, calling for the election of delegates to a constitutional convention simultaneous with the 2004 elections. Drilon didn't agree with my view that holding the two exercises together would politicize the election for delegates. By that time, he said, the politicians are going to be so engrossed in making themselves win that they will leave the con-con candidates alone. He also said that to insulate the con-con from politics, his resolution bars political parties from any candidate, just like in the 1971 con-con.

Keeping the amendment process apolitical is indeed a very attractive idea, but I told Drilon my apprehensions. One is that the 2004 elections could send movie actors and celebrities to the top posts. Another is that the revisions on the Charter would only take effect after 2010, which means so much time will be lost before reforms will be made on the economy and the body politic.

Drilon said, "We should not decide on the basis of fear." He further argued that deferment of charter revisions need not happen, since the terms of elected officials could be reduced to put the new form of government in place, should that proposal be approved. However, I pointed out that this could provoke some instability since the officials elected in 2004 might vehemently oppose a reduction of their terms.

* * *

The Senate chief said the con-con idea has the support of 14 senators now but still "anything can happen." He said that there is a process to be followed by that Senate resolution. It will be referred to the committee on constitutional amendments chaired by Sen. Edgardo Angara which will conduct hearings, after which the committee will write a report. If the resolution has the support of the majority in the committee, it will be debated on the floor.

Interestingly, another resolution calling for the convening of a constituent assembly will also go through a similar process in the House. Which means that the issue of Charter change will be thoroughly debated in a truly democratic process.

* * *

I called up Speaker Jose de Venecia after the news report quoting Rep. Eduardo Nachura as saying he should follow the example of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Angara by disavowing his political ambition. Nachura suggested that the Speaker make a similar "sacrifice" so as to disabuse the minds of those who suspect that he is pushing for Charter change to get the post of prime minister.

JDV pointed out that he had said on several occasions that he had no ambition of becoming president or prime minister. I told him not to worry, for even as an ordinary assemblyman he will shine because of his far-reaching vision and brilliance of mind. He said he agreed with me, and laughed.

* * *

I totally agree with Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho that professionals should no longer be exempted from paying the Value Added Tax. Salaried people like me have our taxes withheld every month—*walang kawala*. But the professionals, such as reputable lawyers and doctors, are among the highest paid or biggest income earners, and yet they do not pay enough income taxes. The Department of Finance statistics, as quoted by our colleague Amando Doronila, tell all: Professionals who earned talent and consultancy fees paid only P620 million in taxes in 2001, only a fraction of the P10.75 billion taxes paid by other types of professionals, self-employed and mixed-income earners. Out of the P80.24 billion taxes paid by individuals, the bulk of P66.3 billion was paid by salaried workers. Moreover, as Doro pointed out—and this is the most telling—compensation workers, including wage earners, account for only 38 percent of individual incomes but contributed 83 percent of tax collection. In other words, the salaried folks carry the tax burden of the nation, whereas professionals pay a pittance. This has to be corrected. Like the President we all have to sacrifice.

As far as slapping a 10-percent VAT on entertainers, there is a suggestion that to make it more palatable, the taxes should be graduated. This is because there are those who earn millions, but many others earn much less.

* * *

Since I wrote about the cases involving prominent citizens, like former Negros Rep. Mike Romero and Ms Cecile Mitra who had problems with the medical insurance firms of Blue Cross/ Blue Shield/ Pacific International, I got many calls and letters from citizens with similar problems. The pattern I see is that these firms are very quick to collect premiums but extremely slow to make payments when their clients are hospitalized. Interestingly the clients are not asked to record their medical history or get a thorough check-up before the sale is made. This could be deliberate, as the firms invariably invoke the same excuse for nonpayment: the patients had a "pre-existing condition" which automatically nullified their contract. There's a lot of deception going on, but curiously not a single medical insurance firm has bothered to reply to this column and similar media reports. They simply stonewall.

* * *

Mike Romero told me that reports indicate that the giant medical insurance firms in the US are represented by franchisees around the world, but unfortunately, many of the problems of our citizens arise from the local firms' non-compliance. Clients with policies drawn from the US-based companies seem to have little problem. He suggested that the House oversight committee on health and related services investigate the cases. I would think that the US firm Blue Cross, would be careful to protect its hard-earned reputation.

The real milking cows

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FRIENDS in pagbabago@pilipinas are planning to come out with a "small" book that seeks to provide answers to the question: "What can I do to help build the nation?"

As envisioned, the answers don't need to be grandiose or heroic. Offhand, some of the suggested "solutions" to the crisis of cynicism and despair bedeviling the country are as simple as "observing traffic rules and not joining the counterflow during a jam," "segregating my garbage," or even "paying my employees a just wage."

But you don't even have to go out of your way to fulfill the most basic duties of citizenship. All you have to do, for starters, is to pay the right taxes and vote responsibly.

And yet, on these two counts, we, as a people fail miserably.

Not that I'm getting on their case, but the entertainment figures who led the rally of professionals protesting the implementation of the 10-percent VAT on their earnings exemplify the Pinoy attitude toward paying taxes. There's a strong sense of entitlement that runs through our notions of citizenship. As in: "The government owes it to me to give me a job, provide me a home, supply it with electricity and clean water, give me free rice, etc., etc." And yet these expectations are not matched by an equally strong realization that we deserve to receive these services only if we pay the taxes we should.

I heard my friend Leah Navarro say on TV during the anti-VAT rally that while she was living in Canada, she didn't mind paying the high taxes because she was receiving so much in return: health insurance coverage, good roads, clean air, etc. Whereas here, she said, she couldn't find enough proof that the government is putting our taxes to good use.

But the system in Canada works not only because taxes are collected efficiently, but also because the majority of its population earn enough to pay taxes in the first place. With almost half of our population living below the poverty line and thus exempt from income tax, the burden of paying for services that everyone—but especially the poor—needs is placed on a relatively smaller proportion of the population.

* * *

FIGURES released by the finance department show that this proportion of the population is even smaller than we think.

A showbiz writer protested in his column that the entertainment industry is the "favorite milking cow" of the government. Excuse me! The real "milking cow" of the government are people like me—salaried and wage earners, whose taxes are automatically deducted from our monthly compensation and even from our Christmas bonuses and, in the case of INQUIRER employees, our profit share.

Make no mistake about it, I'm not happy about the tax bite, and I behold the deductions on my paycheck with, at best, grudging resignation. But I do end up paying my rightful share.

As Amando Doronila wrote it in his column yesterday, in 2001, P80.24 billion in taxes was paid by individuals, whether wage earners or business executives. Of this amount, the bulk—P66.3 billion—was paid by salaried workers. "Compensation workers, including wage earners, account for 38 percent of individual incomes," said Doro, "but contributed 83 percent of tax collection. Salaried individuals have carried a tax burden eight times heavier than that falling on professionals and business executives."

* * *

THE MOST galling thing about the anti-VAT protests is that the VAT will not even be shouldered by the entertainers, doctors or lawyers raising a howl about it. It will ultimately be paid by you and me, by way of higher professional fees, ticket prices and, by way of higher advertising rates, higher prices of basic goods. It will in fact continue the iniquity of the current situation in which the poor bear the greater burden of generating revenue, by way of indirect taxes, because income tax collection is so inefficient and riddled with corruption.

As I remember from Economics 101, income taxes are preferable to indirect taxes because an income tax assures that the rich bear their proportionate share of the burden of development. Indirect taxes extract as much, if not more proportionally, from the poor as from the rich. Where is the justice in that?

* * *

WHAT I wanted to hear from at least one of the spokespersons and respected figures of the entertainment industry was a statement, even if lip service alone, acknowledging that paying the right taxes is a basic responsibility of good citizenship.

And if the inefficient, inept, if not outright criminal use of our taxes poses a problem, then it's also part of good citizenship to take time to make sure that our taxes are used well, either by participating directly in bidding or oversight committees, or by monitoring the performance of government bodies.

Corruption is of course a major deterrent and a huge damper on whatever enthusiasm we may muster in paying our taxes. I remember meeting a group of professionals who had made it a mission to expose corrupt BIR officials by taking part in entrapment procedures at great personal risk. But the group eventually broke up when the few BIR personnel they managed to expose managed to delay the proceedings indefinitely and even wormed their way back in to the agency.

Disillusionment and cynicism explain why the "anti-VAT-ters" met so much sympathy initially. And really, the government has yet to prove that paying the right taxes will redound to the public good. But that's no excuse to shirk our basic duty as citizens and as Filipinos. If ordinary Pinoys can do it, our charismatic performers can do no less.

OFWs' 'disappeared' or 'invisible' families

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

WE came out with a three-part series on families of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) some weeks ago, just before Christmas, the time when OFWs came home in droves. The airport arrival section was packed with families eagerly waiting for their homecoming loved ones.

That scene is repeated year after year, even every day in a smaller version. It never fails to move, it always tugs at the hearts of onlookers. It's mushy, it's tearjerking, it's heartwarming, it's so Pinoy. It's so family.

That series, for whatever it was worth, was also our little way to focus attention on the families of OFWs which we hope would get the attention they deserve during the Church-sponsored 4th World Meeting of Families, which is going on right now in Manila.

Are OFW families represented? Have they been invited? Or are the so-called complete families, the very closely knit, the only ones that could be celebrated? What about families visited by violence and tearing at the seams? What about families that are devastated but trying to be whole?

Will this huge gathering be all-embracing and inclusive rather than exclusive? Unhappy ones need not apply?

A study on migration by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines speaks about the so-called "disappeared" or "invisible" families. These are families of OFWs that are not there, simply because their members are not physically present to each other. The father is a seaman working in a tanker in the Arctic Ocean, the mother is a domestic helper in Rome, the children are with grandparents, aunts, uncles or are being cared for by surrogate parents. There is no home of their own to speak of while the parents are away.

These families are also referred to as "absent-parent families" and the children are called the "left-behind children" or the "parent-absent children." Children are defined as those aged 17 and below. So many labels have been coined to describe the pathetic situation.

Just a few days ago, a government official, proudly Pinoy and eager to market the Philippines' best, talked about sending more of our best out there. As if we have not been doing that already. But a repackaging seemed to be what he was going for. Like, we have more to offer than just the best maids, entertainers and desert workers, now other countries are salivating for our teachers (who will teach and not be maids), health workers and caregivers.

Some church officials have kept stressing that the OFWs are also evangelizers, bearers of the gospel, missionaries. Saying that seems to elevate the OFWs, it adds luster to their menial jobs. I could not quite put my finger on what bothered me about that statement. Then I thought, yeah, the OFWs are being exhorted to make saints of everybody in their overseas milieu while their own children back home are flirting with the devil because there is no one to guide them.

The oft-repeated refrain of caregivers overseas is food for thought: "I care for and sing to sleep someone's child in this strange land, while there is no one to look after my own children back home."

In 1999, a CBCP study said that some nine million children (or 6.8 percent of the population) had at least one parent working overseas. In 2001, the Department of Foreign Affairs estimated that 3.05 million OFWs were away from their families. This estimate probably referred only to heads of families, not to singletons. This did not include some 1.62 million undocumented Filipinos overseas. There are more than six million OFWs out there. Filipinos are found in 193 countries all over the world. OFW remittances peaked in 1998 at $7.367 billion.

The CBCP's 2002 research on the impact of migration revealed that children generally appreciated and understood the efforts of their absent parents. They were aware of the reasons their parents were away: to earn more and provide them with a good education. But while the children appreciated the material benefits, they felt the break in family unity.

The impact of the absence of a parent or both parents is often manifested in the children's performance outside the home. The children, the study found out, generally ranked lower in class and received fewer awards. This is so especially among those with absent mothers. Many had behavioral problems that required disciplinary action in school.

A third generation of OFWs is already on its way to foreign shores. More than 20 years have passed since the first wave of OFWs left for the Middle East and Hong Kong. Many studies have been done to determine its impact. The material gains have surely been a plus for individual families and the country as a whole, but the negative emotional and psychological effects far outweigh the material benefits.

It is starting to show. A whole generation of children has grown up without their parents.

And so these OFWs have been called economic heroes, evangelizers, labor martyrs, dollar earners, hope of the homeland. Accolades have been poured on them for their earning power, pluck and resistance, dedication to work and duty and courage amid danger, but most of all, for their love of family. Ironically, while families have fed on the fruit or the oft-mentioned *katas* (juice or sweat) of the OFWs' hard labor, they have also borne the effects of the absence of parents, particularly that of the womenfolk, from the home.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Pencil

YOUNG BLOOD

Mayumi Gonzales

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I AM a pencil. I draw my own destiny on a blank sheet of paper. I portray a significant role in my own masterpiece of a story. I write what was there yesterday, what is here today and what will be there tomorrow.

I have a sharp, pointed end that opens the eyes of the common people. I hurt them and I blind them with truth. I lead them and I walk with them throughout my life.

I have an eraser on the other end. This is to protect me from the cruelties of life. It erases my fears, my weaknesses, my painful past and my life under fire. It offers me hope of rewriting my tale and it leads me to see a new set of pictures to draw.

I need to be sharpened from time to time. It is the people and the experiences that I encounter each day that make me wiser. Some of the blades hurt me or humiliate me, but it is the same blade that will shape me into a better form.

My body is made of wood, which comes from a tree. The tree is a symbol of life. I am made out of life to sustain life and to give life.

The lead is my spine, marking wisdom for people's young hearts and minds.

I can break any time for I am fragile. I can live forever for I am immortal. I can be passed from generation to generation, but my legacy can stop right here.

I am a pencil that draws the line between good and evil. I am the master of my own creation. I am an individual made to enjoy life.

Mayumi Gonzales, 22, is a 5th year BS Education in English and AB Literature student at De La Salle University.

Withdrawal syndrome

Jennifer T. Lam

WHAT I am experiencing now may be called a "withdrawal syndrome." No, I'm not an addict trying to overcome my drug addiction. But it is like being one, for I'm a chat addict.

My computer, my sole companion during long, sleepless nights, malfunctioned about a week ago. I had already anticipated that horrible moment since I was not giving my chum ample time to relax. My PC would have protested if it could only produce the right words. It could have even brought me to court for my continuous exploitation. But being an automaton and a silent follower, my PC kept performing according to my dictates. It obeyed me uncomplainingly so I could satisfy my cravings.

I do a lot of things on my computer. Besides accomplishing all my written reports and powerpoint presentations, I also do a lot of Internet surfing and, of course, the addicting chatting over MIRC. When I come home from school and my part-time job, I make sure I am immediately in front of my favorite buddy.

Now that my computer has taken a temporary leave of absence, it's me who's suffering. Like a drug addict, I need to rehabilitate myself by doing things I used to do when I still was not hooked on Internet surfing and chatting. But I am still trying to get back to the good old days.

Whenever something bothered me before, I knew that my friends were just a phone call away. But now with all the technological advances, there is a wider range of people who are willing to help me virtually. I do not even know these people personally, but I derive comfort and relief after chatting with them. The feeling is like what I have after having a conversation with my really close friends. It is like dialing Rescue 911, knowing that many virtual individuals would be willing to hear my side of a story. The only difference is, I do not know the persons I am chatting with. And because of this, I have come to believe that surfing the Net and chatting are cathartic.

So here I am, still very much awake in the middle of the night, trying to recover from the internal damage that I have done to myself and hoping for the resurrection of my chum. I am scribbling here some words to lighten the burden inside me, knowing that my friend who used to be just one click away is unavailable to respond to my needs. I am still striving to be a little detached to ease this intense feeling of deprivation.

I tell myself everything is okay. But no matter how many times I try to convince myself, there is still something missing. The pleasure I felt whenever I surfed the Net and chat in MIRC haunts me every now and then. Being unable to chat with my cyberfriends makes me feel as if I am missing half of my life. The frenzied checking of e-mails coming from my loved ones is something that I long for now that I am not anymore online.

I could have had my computer fixed. I could have spent at least P500 to have it brought back into my life. But I opted to let it rest for a while. I am scared that when it gets fixed, I might abuse it again. I am worried that I might exploit it again and that this might lead to its total breakdown or even death. So before it comes back to life, I want to make sure I have already recovered from this withdrawal syndrome. I should have already learned to detach myself from it if that is the only way to preserve my chum's "cyber-rights." Yes, I admit, I have been filled with remorse from the first day of my chum's temporary leave. Now, I am willing to sacrifice my desires if that will guarantee that it will stay with me for a long time. I do not want this friend of mine to leave me again, leaving me without a social cyberlife.

Jennifer T. Lam, 21, is a BA Public Administration senior at the University of the Philippines, Diliman.

THEY SAID

Team player

"I am a basketball player and I obey the decision of the coach."

—Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye on his "demotion" from press secretary to presidential spokesperson

Puzzling move

"Why remove him from where he is doing good?"

—Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras on MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando's appointment as public works secretary

Misplaced apprehensions over presence of US troops

LETTERS PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THIS has reference to the article, titled "Guingona: War to devastate economy," last Jan. 18.

With all due respect to Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., I would like to clarify the following points he raised:

1. That there is "reason to protest" the presence here of 3,000 US troops ostensibly for the purpose of training the Philippine military.

Contrary to the figure quoted by the Vice President, there are only 199 American soldiers doing socio-economic projects in Mindanao under the Bayanihan program. In addition, there is an advance party of six soldiers in Manila for the Balance Piston exercise.

2. That the US military presence "presages the country's involvement and the use of Philippine territory, through the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement, in the US war against Iraq."

This apprehension that the presence of US troops and the MLSA binds the Philippines to US wars is misplaced. Any decision to go to war in Iraq involves a separate decision, and this decision has to be made not by the executive but by Congress, as the Constitution provides. Any decision to approve any joint RP-US military activities has no reference to the MLSA.

With respect to the MLSA itself, it will be implemented, applied and interpreted in accordance with the constitutions, national laws and regulations of the two nations. More importantly, the MLSA is neither a tool to authorize the presence of US forces nor a binding document to continuously serve its interests. Its applicability portion must be satisfied first, that is, RP-US military activities must be under the umbrella of the RP-US Mutual Defense Treaty, the United Nations, or in the case of other cooperative efforts such as humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, rescue operations, it is the decision of either party, or both, to participate.

Further, the MLSA doesn't guarantee automatic provision of logistic support, supplies and services when either party requests for them. A party is expected to exert its best effort only, consistent with its national priorities and interests.

I believe government officials would better serve the country by issuing advisories and suggestions that are based on informed discussions and on facts. Speculations that an invasion of Iraq will "devastate the economy" and result in "disasters that go beyond the Philippine economy and foreign policy" can only serve to aggravate the already tense situation by causing people to panic, and thus, make the wrong decisions.

At this point, the government, including the military, is doing all it can to anticipate and to take measures to protect the people and their interests. While doing so, let us support the Vice President's call to participate in prayers to avert war. It is only with prayerful hearts and cool minds that the whole world will be able to weather this crisis.

**—ANGELO T. REYES, secretary,
Department of National Defense,
DND Bldg., Camp General Emilio
Aguinaldo, Quezon City**

Former rebels to help restore rice terraces

ONE of the eight wonders of the world, the Banaue Rice Terraces, will be repaired soon. The beauty of nature's wonder will be restored and preserved for others to appreciate and hopefully, many tourists will come to our place once more.

The rice terraces badly need sculpturing and repair. We heard that some 240 ex-rebels belonging to the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA) will be tapped to help in the repair of the Ifugao rice terraces. I know these former rebels are very willing and that they can help a lot in restoring the terraces to their original beauty. These ex-rebels are now finding ways to live normal lives and help rebuild their communities.

Banaue is expected to earn a lot from tourism when the restoration work is done. I think plans have already been laid and work on the terraces will soon start.

The people are also to blame for the sorry state of the terraces. But now the people of Banaue and these ex-rebels who once fought against the government realize the importance of the rice terraces to their lives and their heritage.

**—CARLINE B. INOL-BAY,
Bontoc, Ifugao**

Morning after Edsa II festivities

I WAS deeply saddened to see White Plains Avenue last Tuesday morning. The street, on both sides, was full of litter—from styrofoam bowls to pieces of paper, etc. It is ironic and pathetic that people who joined the Edsa II anniversary celebration, people who professed full support for the government, would leave the place dirty. I wonder if these people really knew the reason why they were there or if they were even sincere about it?

In these times, what really matters most is how we conduct ourselves as citizens of this nation. We should be our country's greatest asset. If we cannot even throw our own trash into the garbage bin, then no matter how good our president is, we will never achieve the greatness that we all desire.

**—VERONICA MARIE H. BERTONE,
Antipolo City**

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Politicians should change expensive lifestyle

IT is difficult to understand why many congressmen want to change the Constitution when majority of the people, including many overseas Filipinos like me, are against it.

Instead of Cha-cha, what they should change is their corrupt and expensive lifestyle.

If they really want to change the Constitution, then to be credible and not to be accused of having any vested interests, they should sign a legally binding document that they and their families will never again run for elections.

Our country has no bright future if we have the same traditional politicians and political dynasties running our government.

A parliamentary form of government is not important. What is important is to have a federal form of government as advocated by Sen. Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr. like what we have in Australia. This is the only way for our country to succeed.

**—OSCAR LANDICHO,
2 Goodenia Court,
Voyager Point NSW,
Sydney, Australia**

Questions on the Multitel scam

A STORY on the front page of the Business section last Jan. 15, 2003 said the Securities and Exchange Commission warned the public about believing in the allegations being spread by a Multitel spokesperson that a deal with the SEC was being worked out. The SEC also urged investors who had been victimized to file criminal and civil actions against Multitel's principals.

Assuming that Multitel operated a Ponzi scheme that reached a mind-boggling P20 billion, how come it was allowed to operate beyond the parameters the SEC had approved? Now that the SEC has filed with the Makati prosecutor's office criminal cases against Multitel International Holdings Inc., what does it expect to achieve in case the principals are convicted in court? Will the SEC be able to reimburse the claims of the investors?

I am one of the supposed victims. However, the amount I am now trying to claim may not even be enough to engage the services of a lawyer, not to mention the expenses that will be incurred in the course of the trial which could take longer than the widely covered plunder case against Joseph Estrada.

If the SEC is wondering why I bothered to write this letter, I wish to say I am not the only one among the many small investors who cannot afford the cost of a lengthy litigation. I am just curious why the SEC did not order and give a time frame first to Multitel to settle the termination of investments demanded by investors before it filed criminal cases. I know that the SEC's intention is to protect the public interest and it is very commendable. On the other hand, it could have also triggered pandemonium among the thousands of investors.

If this was a scam, why was it allowed to proliferate seemingly without control when it could have been stopped when the amount involved was much less than than the P20 billion that the SEC mentioned in the story?

And what is the need of wasting more money producing warning materials if the culprits of past scams cannot even be located? This money would serve a better purpose if it is used to alleviate the suffering of some of the investors who duly filed for termination of investment after the authenticity of the claim is verified and confirmed.

**—JOSE V. GONZALES,
joeg_spl@yahoo.com**

English and our future

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

MICROSOFT'S Bill Gates recently toured Asia, spending time in India and China to discuss possibilities of expanding his company's investments. A few weeks after Gates' visit, the Chinese government announced that it was looking for Filipinos to teach English in China.

The two developments are closely related, the recruitment of English language teachers being part of China's attempts to upgrade its global competitiveness in the information technology (IT) industry.

Back in February 2001 there was an article in the business magazine Forbes, reviewing the software outsourcing industry. Outsourcing involves companies in developed countries, mainly American, contracting out certain tasks such as software programming to developing countries, where labor is cheaper.

There was a table in that Forbes article showing the countries leading in this outsourcing industry. At the top of the list was India, with some 300,000 available trained professionals. China was also in the table with 400,000 trained professionals, but the article noted that only 35,000 were considered to be high-level professionals, mainly because of the lack of proficiency in English.

There were three more countries on the list that were considered to be main contenders for the share in this global software outsourcing industry: Russia with about 4,000 trained professionals, Pakistan with 23,000, and the Philippines with 30,000 to 50,000.

The software outsourcing industry is huge. Last Tuesday's South China Morning Post estimates that in the Asia-Pacific region alone, the software outsourcing industry generated some $30 billion in revenues in 2002, with the figures expected to rise this year as the financial crisis in the United States drives companies to cut back costs, again by tapping cheaper labor in Asia.

Back in 2001, according to the Forbes article, India's software outsourcing contracts already generated revenues of $6 billion. That's not loose change; that amount is equivalent to what our overseas Filipino workers send home each year. It's a tantalizing thought: If outsourcing generates enough well-paying jobs locally, it could mean many more Filipinos staying to work rather than going overseas. Remember there are many other segments of the global outsourcing industry, from cartoon animation and customer service call centers to distance education.

The race is on to learn English. The Thai government is investing the equivalent of P1 billion to train their school teachers for English. English language schools have sprouted all over Asian cities, much like corner convenience stores. With the richer countries, such as South Korea, young people go off to the States, Australia, or the Philippines to learn English.

China's recruitment of teachers from the Philippines tells us what their goals are. They're not after perfect spoken English; all they need to develop computer software is reading and writing comprehension, for which Filipinos can provide training. My fear is that when the Chinese do attain some of this English proficiency, they'll beat us to the software outsourcing market. Labor costs are cheaper in China, and more importantly, the Chinese have much stronger skills in science and math.

Mind you, the Chinese aren't interested simply in developing software programs for Bill Gates and other American computer firms. They're enticing the giant computer companies to set up shop within China not just to generate jobs but also to bring in knowledge, skills and technology so that eventually they can develop their own computer industry.

Our view of English is different. On the part of the elite, English is a prestige language, a social marker of "class" to use for shopping in London or New York. For the elite, too, English is a way to migrate overseas and get a job in some large company. Others end up in the United Nations or some international development agency teaching other countries how to solve their problems.

For the masses, we provide rudimentary training, enough to export them as caregivers, construction workers, seafarers, entertainers. Certainly, they're all honest jobs that keep millions of Filipino families afloat, but we serve the world at the cost of neglecting local needs.

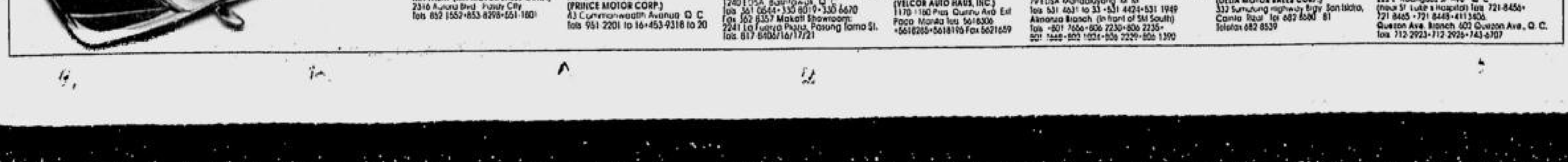
We're always poking fun at the accents our Asian neighbors have when they speak English but they'll have the last laugh yet because right now, they're using their English, however rudimentary and accented, to generate economic opportunities.

The Singaporeans for example, are already looking beyond information technologies, given the downturn in the market for computers. Browse through international science journals and you'll find ads from the Singaporean government, inviting foreign research firms and scientists to set up shop in Singapore for biotechnology, an exciting new field with many potential applications, from agriculture to medicine. The Singaporeans offer strong infrastructure support in terms of laboratory facilities, efficient communications networks, plus a local corps of scientists who speak English. Typically Singaporean, the government launched a movement two or three years ago to discourage the use of "Singlish" (something like "Taglish") in favor of "real" English.

We cannot remain content exporting Filipinos with some English proficiency. We need to move on, looking into how we can further improve our English to facilitate our access to information and skills, which we can then use to develop our local industries, and our economy. Ultimately, the goal should be to encourage more Filipinos to work in the Philippines, speaking both Filipino and English.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net



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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bush dismisses calls for more time for Iraq

WASHINGTON/BAGHDAD—US President George Bush said Iraq was clearly not disarming and brushed aside increasingly frank opposition from allies, as the momentum for war grew.

He showed impatience with UN weapons inspectors who want more months to check Iraq's denials that it is developing chemical, biological or nuclear arms, and with fellow UN Security Council states that have backed their calls.

"It's clear to me now that he is not disarming," Bush said of Iraq's President Saddam Hussein. "Time is running out."

"How much more time do we need to be sure he is not disarming? This looks to me like a rerun of a bad movie and I'm not interested in watching it."

Washington sees no need for further UN approval for an attack on Iraq.

With a crucial 10 days ahead on the path to war or peace, France and Russia underlined that the United States would not get such a mandate any time soon and cautioned against conflict.

"We see no justification today for (military) intervention, since the inspectors are able to do their work," French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin said.

"We could not support unilateral action."

France, which has still left the door open to eventual use of force, has a veto on the 15-seat Security Council, along with the United States, Britain, Russia and China.

Germany, also on the Council, has said it will not join any attack and made clear on Tuesday it would not support UN authorization for war.

"Do not expect that Germany will agree to a resolution that legitimizes war," Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder said in his strongest indication yet of how Berlin would vote.

Bush is massing more than 150,000 troops in the oil-rich Gulf and has made clear he is ready to use them, with or without a new UN mandate, if it considers Iraq has not disarmed.

Oil prices hit two-year highs as the Pentagon ordered two more aircraft carriers and 37,000 troops to the Gulf.

Britain, Bush's main military ally, has also ordered thousands of troops to the region. Australia said on Wednesday it was sending troops and the transport ship Kanimbla to the Middle East this week for a possible war with Iraq.

The next 10 days appear crucial on the path to possible war.

White House officials said Bush would use his major State of the Union speech on Monday to underscore the threat posed by Iraq but would not deliver an ultimatum or declare war.

The same day, chief UN arms inspector Hans Blix delivers a report to the Security Council, which convenes two days later.

If he voices dissatisfaction with Iraq's cooperation—and he has said there are still "many questions" unanswered—it could mean war.

Reuters

Socialist Worker
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Revolt
SAY NO TO WAR
DON'T ATTACK IRAQ
DON'T ATTACK IRAQ
Stop the War Coalition
NOT IN MY NAME
DON'T ATTACK IRAQ

PLACARD-carrying demonstrators gather outside the House of Commons in London, Jan. 21. Muslims and anti-war demonstrators from around Britain gathered outside the building to lobby their local Members of Parliament in an effort to stop any war in Iraq. AP

US general blames pilots in 'friendly fire' bombing

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La.—US fighter pilots showed a "reckless disregard" for flight rules when they mistakenly bombed a Canadian infantry unit in Afghanistan instead of flying away from what they believed was hostile fire, a US Air Force general said on Tuesday.

Testifying in a military "Article 32" hearing, Brig. Gen. Stephen Sargeant pinned the blame for the attack squarely on F-16 pilots Harry Schmidt and William Umbach, whom he accused of violating rule after rule as they zeroed in on the Canadians on Apr. 17 near the city of Kandahar.

"In my opinion, this is a reckles disregard for the SPINS (special instructions) and the ROE (rules o engagement)," Sargeant said, usin military lingo. "There is a breakdown in basic airmanship throughout this portion of the flight."

Schmidt, 37, and Umbach, 43 face manslaughter, assault an dereliction of duty charges for dropping a 230-kg bomb on the Canadians, who were conducting a nigh live-fire exercise that the pilots, ou on patrol, mistook for an attack.

Four Canadians died in the attack and eight were wounded.

The incident hurt US-Canad relations and was one of at least dozen embarrassing "friendly fire accidents by the US military in th Afghan war, but the only one th brought criminal charges.

The hearing, now in its secon week, was to consider whethe the pilots, both former full-tim military pilots now in the Illino Air National Guard, should fac court martial that could bring u to 64 years in prison.

Reute

UN panel: No proof of links between Bin Laden, Iraq

UNITED NATIONS—The United Nations panel monitoring sanctions against Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network has no evidence of links between the terrorist group and Iraq, group chair Michael Chandler said Tuesday.

"We don't have anything yet, and no one has been able to produce anything," he said.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair told a parliamentary hearing in London on Tuesday that "there is some intelligence evidence about linkages between members of al-Qaida and people in Iraq." He did not identify the individuals.

But he said he was unaware of any evidence that "directly links" al-Qaida, Iraq and "terrorist activities" in Britain.

Chandler, who described al-Qaida in a report to the UN Security Council as "a substantial threat, globally, to peace and security," said it was not obviously "in either side's interests to be linked at this stage."

He noted that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein runs what is "still quite a secular country" distinct from the Islamic regime of Bin Laden's ambitions, and added: "Saddam doesn't want a caliphate; he wants to be in charge."

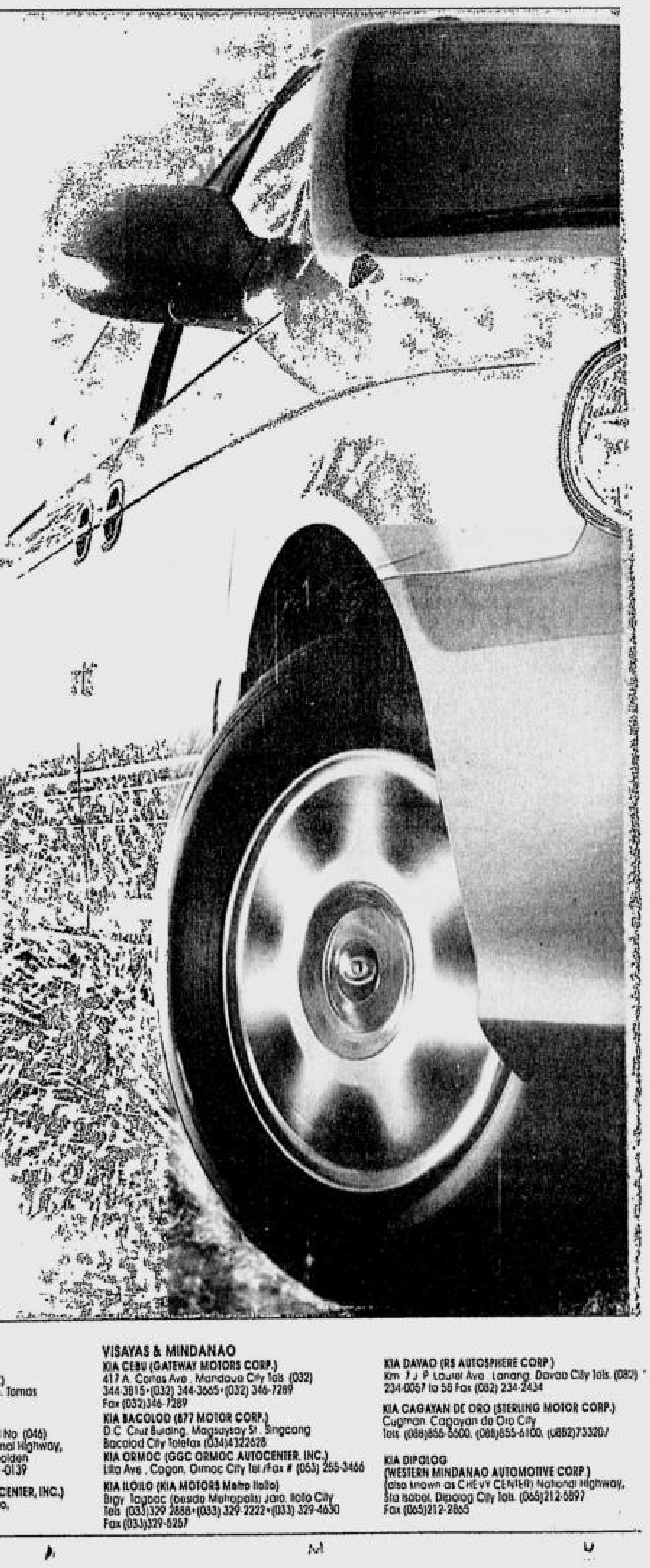
Chandler chaired a panel of five set up in January last year to monitor the enforcement of sanctions originally imposed in 1999 on al-Qaida and the Taliban regime then in power and harboring it in Afghanistan.

The Security Council renewed the sanctions—an arms embargo, a financial assets freeze and travel ban—in a resolution Friday.

It also asked governments to update reports on steps they had taken to enforce sanctions.

Chandler said only 79 of the 191 UN member states had responded to a similar request made a year ago, but added: "I would be reluctant to say any country is reluctant to cooperate; that is not what we are seeing."

AFP



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NBI agents say shooting 'honest mistake'

CEBU CITY—The five agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) attributed to an "honest mistake of fact" the bungled anti-drug operation on Dec. 13 that left five innocent resort workers wounded.

They admitted that they mistook the van of the employees of the Cebu Plantation Bay Hotel as the one being used by suspected big-time drug pusher Roberto Gegremose who was subject of an arrest warrant.

The agents claimed that they shot at the van, not to kill the passengers on board but to force the vehicle to stop because they thought that Gegremose was inside it.

"The shooting incident was just a justifiable consequence triggered and effected, upon the dictate of the respondents' sound discretion on the heels of a judgment call that calls for an immediate action under the circumstance of an honest mistake of fact," they stated in their affidavits submitted to the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas.

The agents said it was a legitimate operation as it was based on information provided by Emmylou Gimeno who was arrested on Dec. 12 for possessing more than 100 grams of shabu.

They immediately conducted a follow-up operation after Gimeno told them that her supplier, Gegremose, would pass by Barangay Look, Mandaue City, at about 2 a.m. on board an L300 van.

When an L300 van passed by, the agents immediately blocked the vehicle. It, however, turned out to be the wrong target.

Michael Monsod, the resort's sports manager, decided to speed off, thinking that the agents were robbers.

The agents, in separate vehicles, fired at and chased the van. The two-kilometer chase ended in Barangay Banilad, Cebu City when the tires of the van got blown.

Five employees, including Monsod, were hurt. The others were Sunshine Gregorio, press relations associate; Ninette Castillon, spa supervisor; Carlos Cajoles, sports attendant and Don Enabe, laundry attendant. Alfie Fernandez, the resort's sport coordinator, was unhurt.

The Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory counted 73 bullet holes in the van.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Central Visayas (CIDG-7) filed multiple attempted murder and frustrated murder before the Ombudsman-Visayas against senior agent Angelito Magno and special investigators Arnel Pura, Teodoro Saavedra, Ray Tumalon and Danilo Garay.

Also charged were radio reporter Paul Lauro, businessman Joey Cal and eight unidentified persons who were believed to be the confidential agents involved in the bungled operation.

Romulo Manapsal, NBI director for Central Visayas, was charged as accessory to the crime. He is also facing a separate complaint for obstruction of justice after he allegedly tried to conceal the identities of the CA involved in the operation.

Magno said in his counter-affidavit he had no hand in the operation as he was only there upon the request of Pura, the team leader.

He said he never fired a single shot as proven by the result of the paraffin test where he was found to be negative of gunpowder burns. *Jolene Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau*

NPAs use attack on firm 'sample' of 'tax' program

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—New People's Army (NPA) rebels have warned firms operating in their areas to pay "revolutionary taxes" or face armed attacks.

In a one-page statement in Hiligaynon, the Coronacion "Waling-Waling" Chiva Command, the NPA unit on Panay Island, also owned up the burning of pieces of heavy equipment of a construction firm in Antique last year.

Julian Paisano, spokesperson of the command, warned that government troops could not protect the firms from NPA attacks.

He cited the burning of two cranes of F.F. Cruz & Co. Inc. in Barangay San Andres, Sebaste town, 124 kilometer north of the capital town of San Jose on Dec. 17.

The cranes were 200 meters away from a detachment of the 32nd Reconnaissance Co. of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division.

The rebels poured gasoline and torched the hydraulic crane and crawler crane that were worth at least P20 million each.

The F.F. Cruz is constructing a 44-km concrete road worth P646 million. This road project of the Department of Public Works and Highways and the Asian Development Bank will be completed this September.

The rebels also staged a similar attack against the construction firm in September 2001 when the NPA torched a backhoe and a dump truck worth P7 million at the company's quarry site in the neighboring town of Sebaste.

"This will serve as a lesson to firms who have contracts in areas under revolutionary political power," said Paisano.

He said the firm was "punished" for failing to pay revolutionary taxes despite earning P100 million from the road construction project.

He scored the construction firm for bringing in government troops instead of giving in to the rebels' demand.

The rebel spokesperson accused the firm of allegedly firing many workers under its ship repair division and the dismantling of picket lines of protesting workers.

"It is reaping what it has sown," said Paisano.

Top LTO official nabbed for bribery

BAGUIO CITY—Police on Tuesday arrested an official of the regional Land Transportation Office after she was caught accepting bribe in an entrapment operation in her office here.

Senior Supt. Generoso Bonifacio, Cordillera director of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, said the suspect, Teodora Caguicla, LTO Cordillera registration officer, was arrested while receiving P1,600 in marked bills.

Bonifacio said they set the entrapment after Connie Tungawan, owner of the ATM Surety and Insurance Co., accused Caguicla of requiring insurance agencies to remit 65-percent from fees collected for each registered vehicle.

Caguicla was charged with direct bribery on Tuesday and is detained at the Baguio City jail.

Police said the P1,600 given to Caguicla was part of the P3,400 that she asked from Tungawan's agency.

An insurance agent here claimed that some insurance agencies were giving Caguicla a portion of their premiums since 1996.

Asked why some insurance companies resort to this practice, Tungawan said this was needed to ensure that they would get clients.

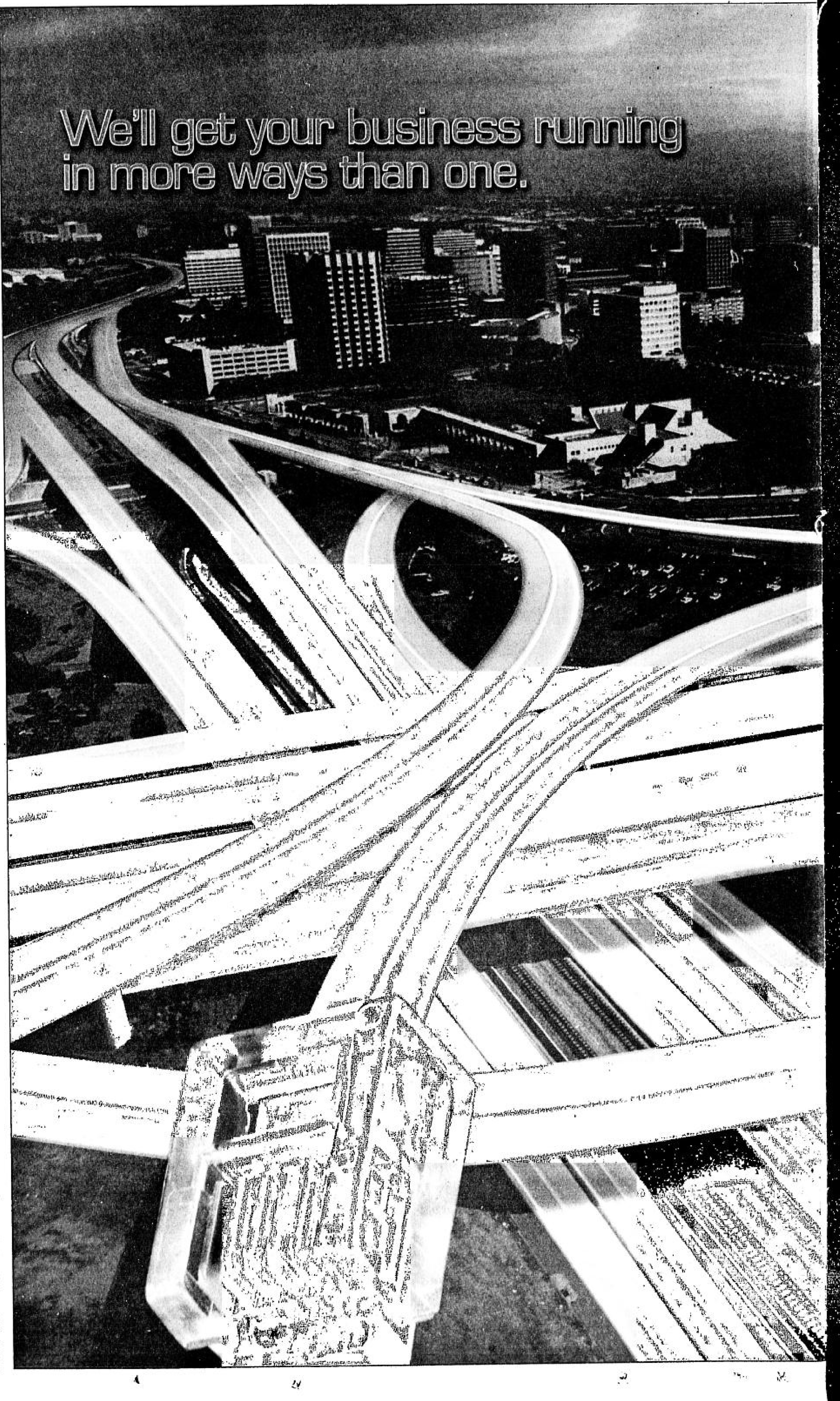
"They're afraid because if they don't do it, they won't have any clients," Tungawan said.

Bonifacio said Tungawan sought help from broadcast giant ABS-CBN. The station's staff asked the Cordillera CIDG to conduct an entrapment operation against Caguicla.

Alfredo Mondiguing, regional director of the Department of Transportation and Communications, said he was aware of the corrupt practices.

"In fact, I tried to impose strict rules on vehicle registration procedure by limiting the people in charge to discourage fixers," he said.

"I had been appealing to insurance owners to stop giving bribes to LTO employees to fast track their papers, but most of them ignored the innovations I want to implement," he said. *Jovelyn Reyes and Jason Rondero, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



IPP CONTRACTS

US power firm ready to testify

TUBA, Benguet—American contractors running the $1.2- billion San Roque Multipurpose Dam Project (SRMDP) are prepared to take their turn at a Senate inquiry on allegedly anomalous power generation contracts.

They said they expect to be summoned to the inquiry following former President Joseph Estrada's testimony that a $14-million bribe facilitated a Laguna hydroelectric plant project in 2001.

Raymond Cunningham, senior vice president of the San Roque Dam Corp. (SRPC), acknowledged here on Saturday that the Philippine-American joint venture project had been advised about a list of so-called independent power producers (IPP) that committee chair Sen. John Osmeña will call to testify in the next few months.

The Senate committee on government corporations, which Osmeña chairs, had just heard Estrada testify that the proposed Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan (CBK) hydroelectric facility was leased as a build-operate-transfer deal to Argentinian firm Impsa as a result of a $14-million bribe.

SRPC and Impsa were included in a list of "onerous and flawed IPP contracts" that was released last year by the Department of Finance.

The IPP contracts covering the San Roque Dam, the Binga hydroelectric dam and the Ambuklao hydroelectric dam in Benguet and the Casecnan multipurpose irrigation and power project in Nueva Vizcaya topped this list.

The IPPs were blamed for the high cost of electricity last year, because these documents oblige the National Power Corp. to buy IPP power regardless of price or need.

Despite the Senate's interest, Malacañang has not finished its IPP review or started a plan to renegotiate these transactions.

But Cunningham said most of the IPP contracts now under government review will stand international legal scrutiny.

He said both the Impsa (Industrias Metalurgicas Pescarmona Sociedad) transaction and the American SRMDP contract are special and indispensable to an independently-run power distribution system in the country.

"We hear that we will be invited but we have not heard anything officially at all. If invited we will come . . . I suspect people will reexamine the contract again to make sure that it is a good and proper contract. We strongly believe it is," he told the INQUIRER here during a fiesta at the Philex Mining Co. facility. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Rebs bring recruitment to urban GenSan areas

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Communist guerrillas have descended into the city to recruit members.

Senior Supt. Jorge Aquisap, acting city police director, told reporters here that New People's Army (NPA) rebels have been very active in at least four villages.

Aquisap said residents of Upper Labay, Sinawal, Conel and San Jose have informed police that some NPA commanders have been frequenting the areas and trying to convince residents to join the insurgency.

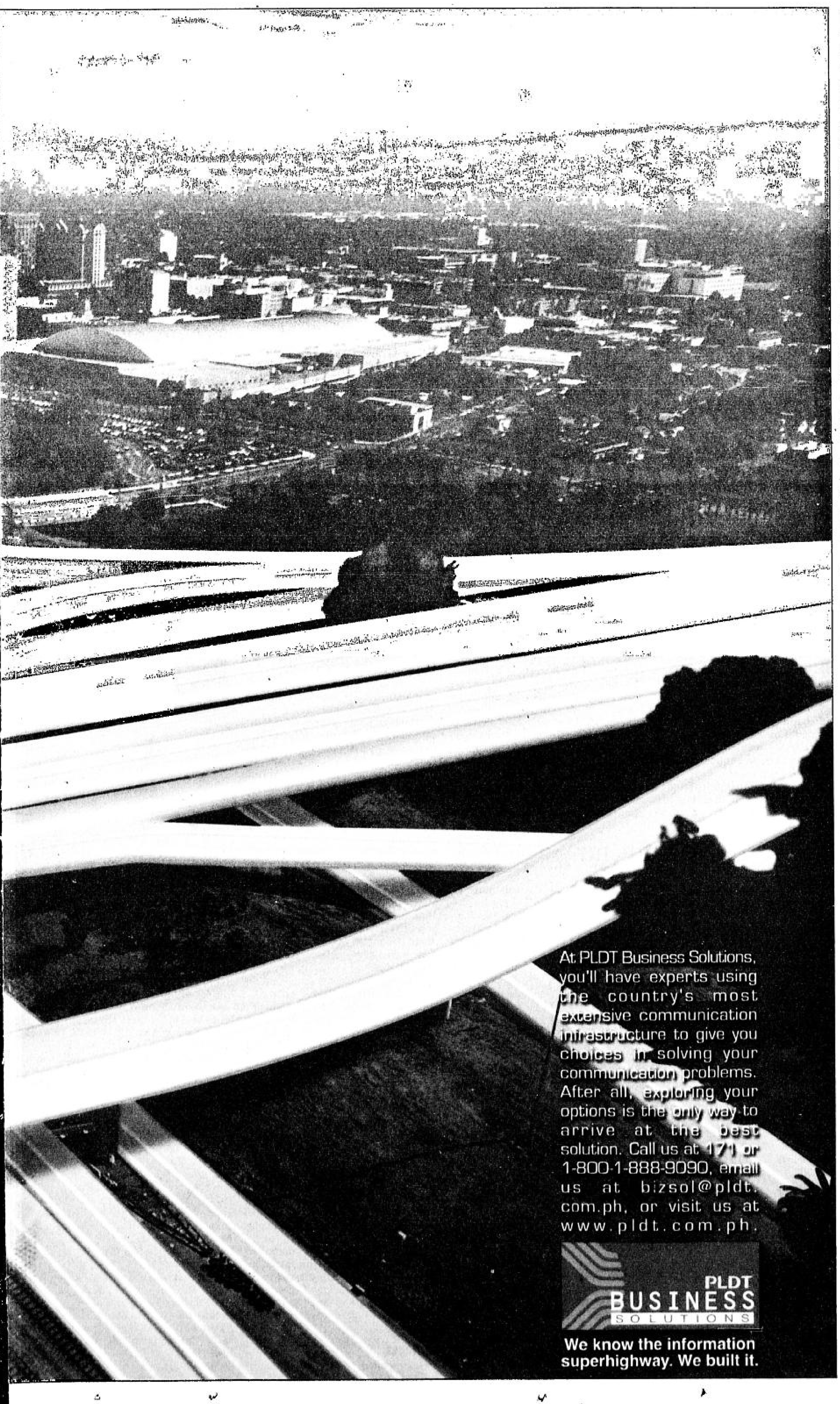
Despite the reported recruitment, Aquisap said the police were not considering the NPA as a real threat.

He said the communist rebels have no capability to destabilize the city's peace and order.

In Mati, Davao Oriental, the list of local government officials supporting the NPA is growing, according to the De--partment of Interior and Local Government.

Romeo Jardenico, DILG regional director, said at least three town mayors in Compostela Valley and three other town mayors in Davao Oriental are "pro-NPA."

"Yes, it's really very alarming. These pro-NPA local officials are regularly providing support to the communist rebels like firearms, money and food." *Aquiles Zonio and Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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Reclaimed land in P180-M port found sinking

By Gerry T. Pagharion
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—The P180 million seaport expansion in Barangay Culasi here is just over a year old but its reclaimed area has already sunk by 0.4 meters.

The reclaimed area would continue to sink in the next five years unless the government conducts repair works that would cost P3.5 million, said Engr. Antonio Veralda, a representative of the Philippine Ports Authority-Western Visayas (PPA-6).

Veralda was invited to last week's session of the City Council to shed light on the defect of the project in Culasi, about six kilometers from the city proper.

Jailed former President Joseph Estrada approved the Culasi Port expansion following his visit to Capiz in 1999. The construction started in February 2001 and was completed in November of the same year.

A monitoring team from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Capiz discovered that during its inspection of the project on Dec. 13, the reclaimed area, which measures 9,636 square meters, have sunk.

The team also observed that there were cracks along the construction joint of a concrete slab in the port. The cracks measured one to two centimeters up to five centimeters.

The City Council, through Councilors Albert Potato and Melvin Abela, initiated a hearing on the matter after receiving a copy of the report by the monitoring team.

Veralda assured Capiceños during the session that despite the sinking of the reclaimed area, the port was still safe for arriving and departing passengers.

He said the sinking was expected to happen due to the use of unsuitable materials or "buga" that could not be removed from among the diggings during the construction of the project.

The monitoring team also asked the PPA, being the project proponent, to explain why a penalty of P150,000 in fine should not be imposed on the agency for violating three provisions of the project's Environmental Compliance Certificates (ECCs).

One violation was that the PPA failed to establish an Environmental Monitoring Fund and create a Multi-partite Monitoring Team in coordination with the DENR in Capiz for broader participation, greater vigilance and appropriate checks and balances in the monitoring of the project implementation.

The PPA also failed to secure a Foreshore Lease Agreement with the DENR prior to the project implementation.

Villagers flee bandits, troops

KIDAPAWAN CITY—At least 41 families fled their homes in Sitio Lawitan, Barangay Kisupaan in President Roxas town on Saturday after receiving reports of sightings of Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang members in the area.

Last week, Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol and President Roxas Mayor Jaime Mahimpit confirmed reports that the gang was sighted in the area.

The sighting was reported while the hunt for the bandits went on in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat, North Cotabato and Maguindanao.

"Somebody told us that we should leave immediately before things turn worse. We became very worried that's why we left," a woman evacuee said.

"Then, we heard of it on the radio . . . but our place is relatively peaceful," the woman said.

The evacuees are now in Sitio Kabinuangan in Barangay Kisupaan. But other residents fled to Carmen, Cotabato.

Of the 41 families from Lawitan, 37 belong to the Manobo tribe. The rest are Muslims.

Some of the evacuees opted to stay along the Pulangi River. Sitio Lawitan is now considered a no man's land.

Piñol said the kidnappers, who sailed upstream passing the Pulangi River, came from Maguindanao. They were led by one Magtanggol Alonto, brother of Pentagon leader Tahir Alonto.

Magtanggol, Piñol said, kidnapped and killed businessman Ambo Torquesa and his driver in M'lang, Cotabato in 1999.

The evacuees' fear built up after government soldiers were seen in their area.

"A military operation might follow," another evacuee said.

Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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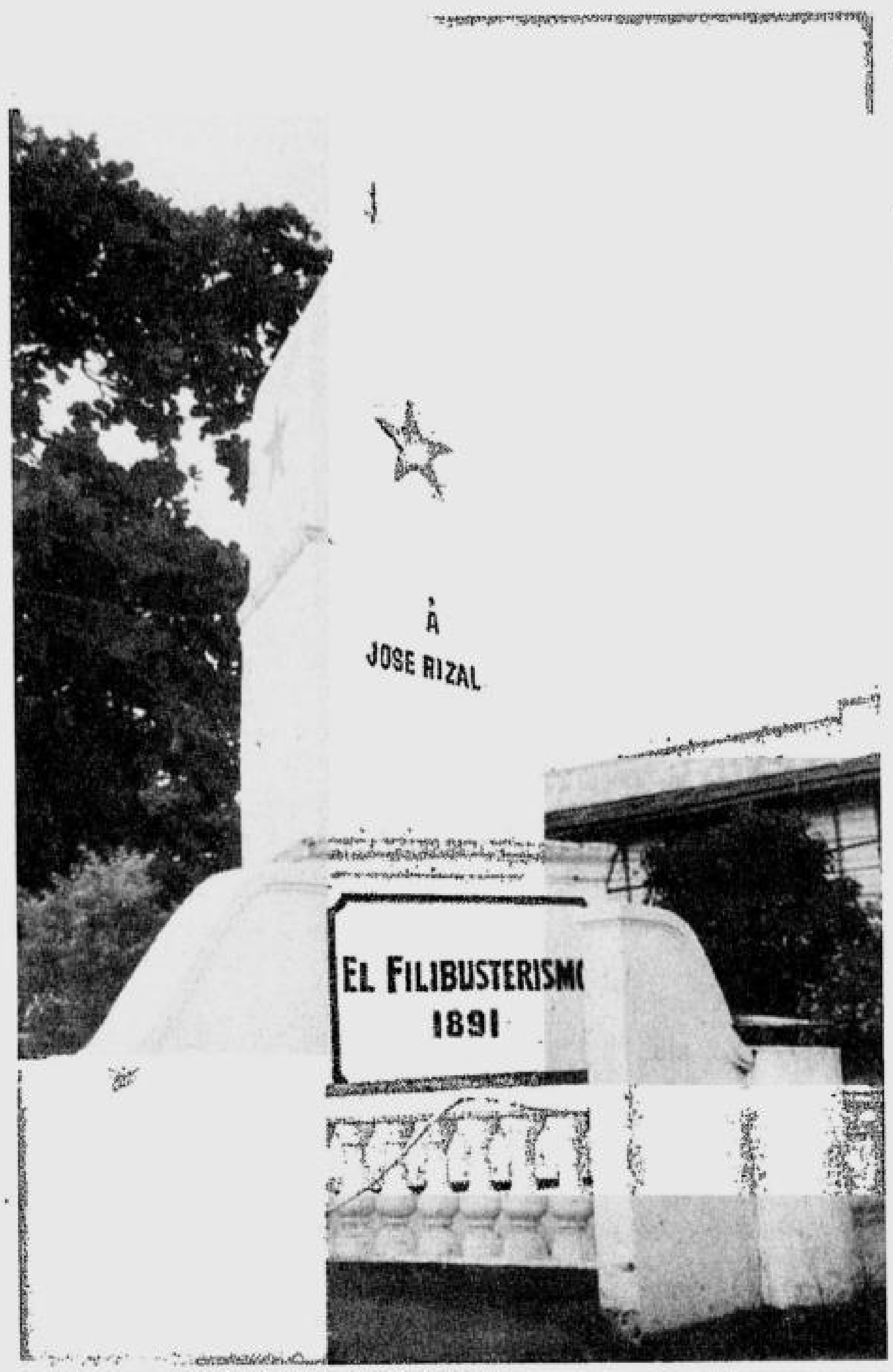
Bicol town hosts oldest Rizal monument



THE OLDEST Rizal monument built in 1899. BERNARD SUPETRAN

By Bernard L. Supetran
Contributor

STANDING in a park in Daet, capital town of Camarines Norte, is a 20-foot metal structure so bereft of intricate design that those unfamiliar with it will simply ignore it. But for the townsfolk, it is a testament to their patriotism and unparalleled reverence for the national hero, Jose Rizal.

Built two years after Rizal's execution on Dec. 30, 1986, it is the country's oldest Rizal monument but is one of the lesser-known historic landmarks pertaining to the Great Malayan.

Its construction began on Dec. 30, 1898 and was completed in February, 1899, shortly after the outbreak of the Filipino-American War.

It antedates by 13 years the one standing at the Rizal Park in Luneta, which was built only in 1912.

Revolutionary work

Located at the Freedom Park at the foot of the Daet Bridge across the Provincial Capitol Complex, the monument was put up by the Revolutionary Army led by Lt. Colonels Ildefonso Alegre and Antonio Sanz.

The people of Camarines Norte freely contributed to the cost of its construction.

The monument's erection was in compliance with the decree of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, then President of the Revolutionary Government, on Dec. 20, 1898 to observe Dec. 30, the second anniversary of Rizal's martyrdom, as a national holiday in the "Free Philippines."

Designed by Sanz, who was also an artist, the landmark is composed of a three-tiered stone pylon with a square base surmounted by a triangle in two stages, the last one tapering off to a point.

The front face of the square contains a black metal tablet installed by the National Historical Commission in 1961 when it was declared a historical landmark.

Inscriptions

Inscribed on the square podium are the titles of Rizal's popular novels, "Noli Me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo," and "Morga," which contained his annotations on "Sucesos delas Islas Filipinas" by Antonio de Morga, a Spanish authority on Philippine historical studies.

Both sides of the upper triangle taper to a culminating point with a five-pointed star and the phrase "A'Jose Rizal."

Oral reports have it that under the base is a time capsule containing the list of contributors to the construction of the monument.

It is also a widely accepted belief that the Masons had a very important role in putting up the pylon because of the pronounced Masonic symbols in its design.

Historian Reynold Fajardo, writing for the journal Cabletow in 1982, said the Rizal Monument was "unquestionably Masonic; the base is a square and is surmounted by a triangle; on the sides of the triangle may be seen the five-pointed star and at the top used to be the all-seeing eye."

Add to this the fact that Rizal, Aguinaldo and Gen. Vicente Lukban, commander of the Revolutionary Army in Bicol, were all Masons.

Martyrs

By building the Rizal Monument, Camarines Norte has virtually become one of the first provinces to celebrate Rizal Day.

To further highlight their place in history, the provincial administration introduced in 1993 a street play reenacting the life and times of Rizal from his childhood to his execution at Bagumbayan, a part of its Rizal Day celebrations.

The one-hour play starts at the Capitol Complex and concludes at the Freedom Park where the execution scene takes place.

Local officials and the Knights of Rizal hold a wreath-laying ceremony at 7:03 a.m., the exact time of Rizal's execution.

On the same lot stands a memorial pedestal dedicated to the patriots who died in the 1898 Daet Uprising.

On April 14, people of the province rose in arms against Spain under the leadership of Ildefonso Moreno and successfully cornered the enemies for four days. After the colonizers had regained control of the town, over 500 persons led by prominent citizens were martyred in the ensuing reign of terror.

Pride

A major tourist, historical and cultural attraction, the monument has become so central in the life of the townsfolk that it has been incorporated in the official seals of the local governments of Daet town and Camarines Norte province.

According to Gov. Jesus Typoco Jr., the century-old monument has become a source of pride not only for the people of Daet and Camarines Norte but also for Bicolanos in general.

Typoco added that the monument proved the people's high regard for Rizal, despite the fact that he had never set foot in the province.

Daet Mayor Tito Sarion pointed out that the landmark reflected the patriotism and the character of the townsfolk despite their lack of material wealth.

As a proof, the municipal board declared Daet a "Town of Character" in 2001, citing the inspiration brought about by the national hero in molding a leadership and populace brought up in good character.

For the people of the province, the Rizal Monument is definitely more than a piece of cement; it is a symbol of hope and love of motherland.

And when in Daet, failing to see it is a tragedy of monumental proportions.

THE AUTHOR is assistant vice president of Zenith Insurance Corp. in Manila and member of the Metro Daet Development Foundation Inc. He does PR work for the lifestyle section.

Lone Mangyan town official in Mindoro is no 'trapo'

By Madonna T. Virola
Pola, Oriental Mindoro

HE was taken in by the Lakas-NUCD party as one of its 10 candidates in Pola, Oriental Mindoro during the 2001 elections.

He is a Mangyan, poor, and reached only Grade 5 in his studies, but ironically, to some, he was the only candidate from his party to win in the elections. This also makes him the only Mangyan municipal councilor in the province.

When asked why he emerged victorious, Councilor Avelino Landone, fondly called Binoy, said in Filipino, "I did not talk much. Perhaps it was because during the campaign period, people better remembered those who spoke a few words and in the last of the line."

Twenty candidates had vied for the eight seats for councilors in the municipal government. Landone placed seventh in the elections.

Landone said that while other candidates took about an hour to woo the voters, he only spoke for not more than five minutes. "Perhaps only three minutes," he said.

He made no promises, and did not dance and sing. He also did not do much waving and handshakes with the people since, he claimed, he is not used to these gestures.

On top of it, Landone hated *trapos* (traditional politicians). He was trained on alternative and "transformational" politics through seminars, sessions and exposures.

"Many politicians are good at making promises during elections but never carry them out," he said.

Reason for running

Landone said he decided to run because he noticed that during every election period, political candidates would come to him and ask for the votes of the Mangyan.

He then thought that if it were him who would sit in the municipal council, the many experiences of innocent Mangyan people being used by the politicians could be avoided.

"What we like about him [Landone] is that he does what he says. He's sincere," said Corazon Limpiado, a voter from Barangay Matulatula.

Landone's wife Lucresia Riquinala, also a Mangyan, cited her experience of hearing jeers from Tagalog voters about his candidacy.

"I was then aboard a jeep when I heard a woman say, 'Binoy will not win because he is not schooled'," Lucresia said.

> He made no promises, and did not dance and sing. He also did not do much waving and handshakes with the people since, he claimed, he is not used to these gestures.

Another passenger pointed at Lucresia for the woman to notice. "She did not hear a single word of retaliation from me," Lucresia said.

She said she heard another passenger say that her husband was better than the other candidates because he had been to Malacañang. Landone is an officer of a Mangyan federation.

The couple have 10 children. One of them goes to the Abada College in Pinamalayan town, while the younger ones attend public schools in Pola.

"During the campaign (period), Binoy would be seen bringing his food, which consisted of sardines and rice on banana leaf. He is not ashamed of where he comes from," said one voter.

Landone garnered more than 3,000 votes and spent around P7,000 in the elections. He did not get any money from his party. The campaign funds were donated by advocates of indigenous people's rights and some friends, while Landone himself shelled out P1,000.

A campaign sticker donated by the Mangyan Mission read: "Katutubo ng Bayan, Ihalal (Vote for the Native of this Land)."

Only 1,000 of about 14,000 voters in Pola are Mangyan people. Landone, 45, belongs to the Tadyawan tribe. There are eight Mangyan tribes on Mindoro Island.

Some of those who voted for Landone victory was not a mockery of the elections because he had a track record of effective community leadership and service.

Track record

From 1992 to 1996, Landone served as vice mayor of the Kapyan Agpaysarigan Mangyan Tadyawan Inc. (Kamti), a federation of the Mangyan Tadyawan which seeks to promote unity and harmony among the Mangyan tribes. As an officer of Kamti, he covered the towns of Socorro, Pola, Pinamalayan, Naujan, Victoria, Gloria and Bansud, where most of the Mangyan commnities are found.

In the 1994 and 1997 local elections, Landone won twice as barangay councilor, hauling the biggest number of votes.

Among his accomplishments were the installation of a community water system, construction of a high school (an extension of a national public school) for both Tagalog and Mangyan residents, and the construction of basketball courts.

Landone had also attended several training programs, like one on land dispute management which he was able to apply effectively in resolving one conflict between Mangyan and Tagalog residents.

"One time, a Tagalog asked a Mangyan to leave his house because the land involved was covered by the Tagalog's pastureland. When the Mangyan did not agree because he believed that it is part of the ancestral land (over which he understood that he has a right as a Mangyan), the Tagalog got mad and destroyed the Mangyan's house using a bolo," he said.

The case was elevated to the municipal court and eventually resolved through Landone's arbitration.

Landone's parents stopped sending him to school, thinking that he would be told to leave their land.

"My parents believed that the government would only take for another job outside Mangyan land whoever has finished schooling. This is not favored by our ancestors who prefer that the Mangyan serve their own community," he explained.

Supportive

Unlike other Mangyan people who change their ways when elected, Landone has remained unassuming.

"He even helps cement the roads," said Rex Buenaventura, a resident of a community assigned to the town official.

Bining Limpiada, a youth leader in Sitio Bagong Pook, which overlooks Naujan Lake, hopes that Landone will only change for the better.

"He is very supportive of us poor farmers and fishers by attending our meetings where we discuss our problems on our land being taken by a powerful family for eco-tourism," Limpiada said. One of his ancestors was a Mangyan.

As town councilor, Landone is supposed to get a salary of P17,000 a month. About P500 to P1,000 goes to contributions, including penalties for coming late to the session.

"Several people come to me and ask for financial help," he said.

His new role requires that he wear a *barong Tagalog*, pants and leather shoes, which he is not comfortable wearing.

On sunny days, it takes him an hour on his motorcycle to arrive at the session hall in Pola.

"One time, Binoy was very wet because of heavy rains and was not able to attend the session," Lucresia said. She added that her husband had been absent only four times, and on one occasion, their child was brought to the hospital for an operation.

While Landone admitted that he could not easily understand some technical terms, his shortage of English is not a big obstacle to his participation in municipal council deliberations. "My vote is important," he said.

Landone is chair of the committee on cultural minority (the term "indigenous peoples" is preferred in international legal forums as the terms "cultural minority" and "tribal Filipino people" have derogatory connotations).

Projects

His resolution for the acquisition of four boats had been approved.

LANDONE COURTESY OF DILG - ORIENTAL MINDORO

Landone said he was pushing for the construction of a center for indigenous peoples in the town proper. The project, he explained, would provide the Mangyan safe shelter when visiting the town from the mountains to attend celebrations and run errands.

The official is also working on water systems for the Mangyan communities. Three of his target Mangyan communities now have water systems and four others are for installation. Each community has 30 to 70 families.

"I dream that concrete roads will reach the Mangyan communities," he said, adding that these would also benefit the non-Mangyan.

When asked how he compares his life inside and outside the government, he said, "It's better to be outside the government. There are many who ask for favors and you cannot grant them."

He regrets the politics involved in decision-making. "There is the fight between politicians. They should give way to each other first while in the position," he advised.

He has no personal plans yet for the coming elections.

"It is God who will decide, like in the recent elections where I did not plan to run. I abhor politics," he said.

Now that he has entered another, albeit very challenging, world, he said, "The Mangyan have the right to law. They should use it as a stepping stone. But they should not do wrong."

Now, its GMA's political affairs adviser batting for Charter change

From page A1

sembly for the purpose of amending the Charter before 2004.

The President's preferred mode is a constitutional convention, with delegates to be elected during the 2004 national elections—a position also earlier taken by administration senators.

Her spokesperson, Ignacio Bunye, said at a briefing yesterday that Malacañang was leaving it up to the House and the Senate to resolve the issue on which mode to adapt.

But Rufino said: "It's about time we revisited the 1987 Constitution. "We can no longer afford having more Edsa uprisings in the streets."

He noted that under the current setup, an elected president had a fixed tenure of six years.

"What if we make a mistake and elect a bad leader? Then we're stuck with him for six years and for the time being, the country goes to the dogs," he said, adding:

"Where in the world can you find a multiparty system like ours [with] a presidential setup?"

Rufino sought to allay fears that the Philippines might end up with a parliamentary model like Italy and its virtual "revolving door" for governments.

"It did not destroy Italy," he pointed out. "Politics was confined to Parliament, and the rest of the nation, particularly its economy, went on and progressed."

Not necessary

At a House-sponsored forum on Charter change, federalism advocate Jose Abueva shot down Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin's proposal that the people be asked through a national referendum whether they wanted the Constitution rewritten.

Abueva, a former president of the University of the Philippines, said it was not necessary to hold a referendum because it was Congress' constitutional duty to initiate amendments.

He also noted that it would be unfair to let the people decide on the matter because, he said, three-fourths of the population had not even read the Charter.

But three former presidential candidates and their political parties backed the call for a referendum aired by Sin and former President Corazon Aquino.

In a joint statement, Raul Roco of Aksyon Demokratiko, Lito Osmeña of Promdi and Rene de Villa of Reporma said these questions should be added to the ballot in 2004:

- Do you want to amend or revise the Constitution?
- If so, do you want to call for a constitutional convention?

The three men cited Article 17, Section 3 of the Constitution saying that "by a majority vote," Congress may "submit to the electorate the question of calling such a convention."

"In so doing, the people can study and discuss and familiarize [themselves] with constitutional issues," they said. "That educational process itself will be beneficial to the rule of law."

Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. also told reporters that he favored the conduct of a referendum, with the people asked whether they wanted the Charter amended, and by what mode.

But he cautioned against the proposed inclusion of the vote for constitutional convention delegates in the 2004 elections. This, he said, would make the convention too politicized.

Pros and cons

At the House forum on Charter change, a former president of the Philippine Constitution Association said a constitutional convention would be highly political and most divisive.

Camilo Sabio, also a former secretary general of the House and a member of the 1971 constitutional convention, said a constituent assembly would be better because it could be limited to few amendments, such as the form of government and certain economic provisions.

"If we go by a convention, then many issues would be proposed especially by the delegates from the provinces. There would not be enough time for a full discussion of issues," Sabio said.

He said even the rules would take up much time, and cited the experience in 1971 when "many delegates had no idea about the rules."

Western Samar Rep. Eduardo Nachura, chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, said the explanations of Abueva and Sabio helped firm up the chamber's support for a constituent assembly as the mode for Charter change.

He said he was "very confident" that the House would approve House Concurrent Resolution 16, which asks the Senate and the House to sit as a constituent assembly.

The resolution is up for plenary deliberations on Tuesday.

But Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra said he would prefer a constitutional convention.

He also said convention delegates would be more impartial in performing the task than legislators who might be vested with personal interest.

But most of the people of Bacolod prefer not to push through with Charter change, Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella said.

Puentevella, one of those who did not sign House Resolution 16, said he would consult various sectors in the city to get the real sentiments of the people.

"I will bring the voice of the people to Congress," he said.

For all that, barangay chairs nationwide want the Charter amended through a people's initiative.

Liga ng mga Barangay national president Jose Marty Lim said a people's initiative, coursed through the country's 42,000 barangays, would "ensure that the consultations are brought directly to the people."

"The [barangay chairs] can lead the grass roots consultations and gather the necessary signatures to initiate any amendment . . . " Lim said in a statement.

He added that a people's initiative would be more democratic and more economical than the other modes being considered. *With reports from Donna S. Cueto, Norman Bordadora and Leila B. Salaverria in Manila; Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Lawmakers banned in proposed con-con in 2004

By Cynthia D. Balana

LAWMAKERS and representatives of partisan groups will be disqualified from running as delegates to the proposed constitutional convention that will amend the 1987 Constitution, Senate President Franklin Drilon said yesterday.

The prohibition is contained in Section 3 of the Resolution of Both Houses No. 1, which calls for a constitutional convention in 2004 and which Drilon and 13 other senators from both the majority and minority blocs filed the other day.

Drilon said in an interview that this was intended to address whatever skepticism or suspicion might be directed at any proposal from legislators regarding Charter change.

He said the proposal was also patterned after the 1970 election for constitutional convention delegates, wherein political parties were prohibited from fielding candidates to ensure non-partisanship.

Delegates, he said, should be elected on the basis of their qualifications and their position on various issues.

The resolution also provides that elective or appointive public officials, including members of the Armed Forces and officers and employees of government-owned and -controlled corporations, will be considered resigned when they file certificates of candidacy.

Government officials who resigned to run as delegates but not yet of retirement age may, if elected, add to their length of government service the period they served in the convention.

The resolution is also intended to prevent any political, civic, religious or professional group from intervening in the nomination of a candidate. Any form of aid or support favorable to or against a candidate's campaign for election is likewise discouraged.

If the resolution is approved by two-thirds of all the members of both houses, the constitutional convention will be composed of two elective delegates from each representative district who shall have the same qualifications as those required of the members of the House of Representatives.

The proposed election of delegates will coincide with the national elections on May 10, 2004.

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Joker: Palace graftbuster should be probed

From page A1

transportation secretaries of the Ramos, Estrada and Macapagal administrations, respectively, according to the senator. Enrile died several years ago.

The Piatco project was earlier investigated by the Senate blue ribbon committee, which ruled that all five contracts covering the project were null and void and were attended with fraud and corruption.

The committee, which is chaired by Arroyo, said the entire exercise that led to the construction of Terminal 3 was tainted with irregularities committed every step of the way through the DOTC.

The linchpin of the negotiations for, award of, and amendments to the contracts were indubitably the transportation secretaries and the heads of the agencies under them, according to Arroyo. He said the Piatco project highlighted how Cabinet-level officials flouted the law with impunity.

"Rama should be the one investigated for incompetence," Arroyo said at a press conference. "Worse, he does not understand the limitations of his office."

The senator then asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to rein in Rama as he was becoming an embarrassment for the administration. The PAGC is under the Office of the President.

While Arroyo wanted former transportation secretaries charged with graft, Manda yesterday said that transportation and airport officials of the Estrada administration be the first ones charged in connection with the alleged onerous provisions and supplements of Piatco's contract to build Terminal 3.

"The transportation secretary and the airport general manager under the Estrada administration should be the ones investigated for the signing of Supplements 1 and 2 of the Piatco contract. I only signed Supplement 3, which I think is the most above board of the supplements under the contract," Manda told the Inquirer.

Manda perplexed

Manda was referring to Rivera and former airport general manager Antonio Gana. "Why should they single out the signing of Supplement 3 when there is no money involved in that supplement," he said.

"I am perplexed. I was among the last to sign so why am I the one being publicly charged," said Manda, former president of Lualhati Foundation, the charitable organization identified with Ms Macapagal.

Manda said that he was the one who discovered that Supplements 1 and 2 did not go through the usual process of the National Economic Development Authority.

Supplement 1 involves the construction of an access road that will connect Terminal 3 to Terminals 1 and 2 while Supplement 2 involves the removal of underground structures or obstacles at the site of the new airport terminal.

At his press conference, Arroyo also noted Rama's violation of the PAGC mandate.

Executive Order No. 12 creating the PAGC requires that the agency not make public any record or information in connection with an investigation when a disclosure will deprive the respondent of his right to a fair and impartial adjudication, according to Arroyo.

The order also requires that all PAGC disclosures relating to an administrative case or complaint be balanced, fair and accurate. "The reason for this is so that reputations of persons shall not be ruined," Arroyo said.

"Rama does not understand this. He wants to convict people through media but spares the real culprits. He's fond of disclosing it and even conducts press conferences to announce the people he's investigating," the senator said.

Premature announcement

He cited the case of former Education Secretary Raul Roco, who resigned from his position because the PAGC prematurely announced the investigation it was conducting on Roco regarding graft charges filed by teachers.

Arroyo said Rama also erred in filing charges of obstruction of justice against former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez for his directive to the Bureau of Immigration not to divulge information on the trips of the President and Cabinet officials.

Rama should not have charged Perez for "operational lapses" because the PAGC chair can only investigate anti-graft and corrupt practices, Arroyo said.

Reacting to Arroyo's scathing remarks against Rama, former Solicitor General Frank Chavez came to the defense of the PAGC chair.

"Mr. Arroyo's admonition for Rama not to convict people through the media should also apply to the senator," said Chavez, a lawyer for Piatco.

Chavez reminded Arroyo that a court of law, not the blue ribbon committee, was the final arbiter on the legality of the Piatco contract.

"In castigating Rama, Senator Arroyo dragged down Piatco to the mud for supposedly entering into a flawed contract with the government for the Naia 3," Chavez said.

Rama did not get support from the Save Naia 3 Coalition. Segismundo Diaz, spokesperson of the coalition, assailed Rama for assuming that Piatco's contract to build Terminal 3 was null and void. Diaz said the Supreme Court has yet to decide on the validity of the contract.

JAIME CARDINAL SIN: How can family be good news when today even the basic family structure of father, mother and child is put into question by proponents of same sex marriages. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

42 babies ...

From page A1

registered as delegates to this meeting. This is truly a gathering of families," Sin said in a prepared message read during the opening of the congress at the Philippine International Convention Center.

The schedule of activities for the young delegates include changing of diapers, brushing of teeth, block-building, drawing, painting and taking a rest. Other activities are watching TV and films and doing action songs before they are turned over to their parents at night.

THE RITES of the Fourth World Meeting of Families start on Wednesday with a Mass officiated by Bishop Orlando Quevedo at the PICC. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Abortion

Villegas explained why the babies and toddlers were included in the meeting. He said organizers were hoping that the presence of the young delegates would dramatize the Church's strong stance against abortion and artificial contraception.

"It takes a sick mind to get bothered by the sight of a baby. The normal mind gets excited and thrilled to see a baby because every baby is a blessing," said Villegas, director of the Edsa Shrine.

"There is no baby who enters the world from the womb of the mother as a curse," he said. "Every baby comes to life as a blessing."

He disclosed that from time to time, people deposited aborted babies at the Edsa Shrine. So this year, organizers asked the Vatican to allow babies to attend the meeting of families as delegates, according to Villegas.

Attendance at the conference by foreigners—475 from 82 countries—was far lower than the 4,000 originally expected, because of security concerns and Pope John Paul II canceling his plans to attend, organizers said. The Pope is scheduled to address the gathering via a live satellite feed Saturday.

Police said more than 2,000 security personnel were guarding against attacks on the conference.

Sexuality

At a press briefing, organizers dismissed issues of premarital sex, sexual promiscuity, homosexuality and same-sex marriages as things that were merely a fraction of the "complex" problems affecting modern-day families.

"Let us not be too concerned about sexuality, parents have their obligation to teach their about God, about human life," Villegas said. He was replying to questions whether these issues would be discussed at the meeting.

But Villegas said children could make their own judgement on such matters when they are old enough.

"We teach them positive values. We don't even have to teach them what is wrong because in teaching them what is right, our children will be able to develop themselves and make good value judgement," he said.

Villegas advised parents to spend more time with their children and to be their "friend" to effectively guide them on matters affecting the family.

Fr. Mat Garcia, head of the event's sons and daughters congress, said the organizers would tell delegates 7 to 18 years of age that the pious lives of saints were "a valid way of presenting morality."

Apart from human sexuality, families have other problems to tackle like justice, poverty, collaboration with others faiths, and the culture of death, said Msgr. Jesus Romulo Ranada, who oversees the event's international theological congress, which has parents in attendance.

But some young delegates lamented the lack of topics that are an integral part of growing up. "These are things that we see on television, the Internet and even through text jokes. We do need some general guidance on issues that affect our bodies and sexuality," said a 17-year-old Filipino delegate, who asked not to be named.

Family as good news

In his opening address, Sin criticized the idea that family values had become outdated.

"Is the family really good news when traditional values of fidelity and commitment are frowned upon as vestiges of an antiquated past? How can the family be good news when today's children cannot even be safe in their own homes?" he asked.

"To this question I dare respond yes: The family is still good news to the third millennium. But not simply family, it has to be a Christian family."

Sin said threats to the family came from high rates of divorce, broken families, incest, proponents of same-sex marriages and alienation within the home because of preoccupation with the Internet and cable television.

"Marriage is not a union of asexual beings. That man is male and woman female is not an accident of nature. There is a meaning inscribed in the very sexual differentiation. The very sexual differentiation is the very vehicle for communion," Sin said.

Before the opening of the congress, gays hit the Church for keeping matters affecting them out of the international meeting.

Gay activists protest Church ideal of family

From page A1

the family as composed of a husband, a wife and their child or children was no longer representative of reality.

"This concept of the ideal family is limited and limiting," said Anna Leah Sarabia of the Women's Media Circle.

The Associated Press reported that outside the Philippine International Convention Center, dozens of gay activists protested discrimination by the Catholic Church.

"We are appealing for gays to now be accepted by their families and governments," said Michael Urbano, 20.

Church officials said gays and lesbians were welcome at the triennial conference as long as they did not attend as couples.

Sarabia said the Church's definition of family had led certain schools to discriminate against children of single-parent families or adopted kids of same-sex partners.

She pointed out that even society in general was viewing with discrimination those families outside of the Church's definition.

She claimed that 48 percent of Filipino families were actually non-traditional, and did not conform with the idealized definition of a family with heterosexual parents and children.

According to Ma. Rosalyn Mesina, officer in charge of the Women's Legal Bureau Inc., even the Constitution has the same "exclusive" concept of the family.

"It has become blind to the reality that there are families composed of just one parent and the children, of grandparents and their grandchildren, and of same-sex partners with adopted children," she said.

Mesina said that because of this situation, those types of families considered abnormal by society had less protection in law.

Myth

The Democratic Socialist Women of the Philippines (DSWP) said that in the traditional concept of the family, it was the father who had the power and who decided for the family.

This has "over time resulted in problematic situations especially for the women family members," it said, and cited the abuse and violence committed against women.

The DSWP also said "the ideal two-parent nuclear family is fast becoming a myth."

"Whether brought about by death or temporary or permanent break-ups, single-head families exist in big numbers, and cannot be ignored," it said in a statement.

Another reason cited for family separations was the poverty that had resulted in either one of the parents going abroad to work.

The DSWP said that according to the latest statistics, there were 7.4 million overseas Filipino workers, about 60 percent of whom were women.

'Neo-paganism'

Cardinal Alfonzo Lopez Trujillo, Pope John Paul II's representative to the conference, urged Roman Catholics to reject secular lifestyles supposedly threatening Christian family values.

He singled out television, which he said "jeopardizes the parent's right to educate," and called for the formulation of family policies against new lifestyles taking the form of "neo-paganism."

"One important aspect of those policies entails the need to orient and correct the communications media, particularly television, which enters into families like an intruder and jeopardizes the parent's right to educate," said Trujillo, who is also the president of the Pontifical Council of the Family.

"To discover God in the family ... means to grow as Christians and to call for the destruction of the idols that secularism fabricates in an unceasing, difficult and bewildering way," he said.

Bishop Socrates Villegas said a final statement was expected to address perceived threats to the family, including abortion, child abuse and child prostitution.

Conference organizers said another conference aimed at young people was being held to heighten their appreciation of their families, "especially their being a seedbed of the Christian faith."

With an AP report

Filipinos happy with family life but...

From page A1

Six percent of the respondents were either fairly, very, or completely dissatisfied with family life; another 6% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; and the remaining 2 percent were neutral.

Support for divorce, however, seems to be growing while opposition appears to be diminishing.

The same survey, which has a margin of error of plus and minus 3 percent, found that 36 percent agreed with the statement "Divorce is usually the best solution when a couple can't seem to work out their marriage problems."

This is a significant increase from the 29 percent who agreed with the statement in 2001, considering the strong lobby of the Catholic Church against any divorce bill in Congress.

Only 50% disagreed with divorce, compared to 61 percent in 2001. Fourteen percent of the respondents in the latest survey and 10 percent in the previous one were neutral on the issue.

Cohabitation

Even so, cohabitation outside marriage is still frowned upon by a majority of Filipinos.

The latest survey found that only 35 percent agreed with the statement "It's a good idea for a couple who intend to get married to live together first." In a 1998 survey, 37 percent favored cohabitation before marriage.

About 50% of the respondents in the latest survey and 53 percent in the previous one disapproved of cohabitation before marriage.

Asked whether "It is all right for a couple to live together without intending to get married," 20 percent agreed with the statement compared to 17% in 1998. Disagreement also dropped to 68 percent, compared to 73 percent in 1998.

Married vs single life

In the 2002 survey, 61 percent agreed and 19 percent disagreed with the statement "Married people are generally happier than unmarried people."

SWS noted that feelings about happiness and marriage had become "more intense."

In the latest survey, 23 percent strongly agreed with the statement, compared to only 7 percent in 1994.

On the statement "It is better to have a bad marriage than no marriage at all," only 28 percent agreed while 58 disagreed in the 1002 survey.

Children and family

The latest survey showed that Filipinos considered raising children within marriage very important.

About 93 percent agreed with the statement "Watching children grow up is life's greatest joy." Less than 2 percent disagreed.

Three-fourths of the respondents agreed with the statement "People who want children ought to get married." Only 13 percent disagreed.

At the same time, however, 65 percent agreed with the statement "One parent can bring up a child as well as two parents together," compared to only 19% who disagreed.

SWS said the finding was relevant not only to cases of divorce or legal separation but also to cases of death of a spouse or the absence of a parent whose place of employment was away from home.

Having children mattered very much to 51 percent who agreed with the statement "People who have never had children lead empty lives." About a third of the respondents did not consider it essential to have children.

Abaya next AFP chief

From page A1

impressed by Abaya's handling of terrorist bombings last October that killed more than 20 people, including an American soldier.

Seven suspects belonging to the Abu Sayyaf kidnap gang have been arrested in connection with the terrorist bombings.

No buts

In Davao City, Ms Macapagal teased reporters about her choice of Abaya that she was not saying it (but) "I don't deny it."

Pressed whether she was having second thoughts on Abaya, the President replied: "No—*walang* (no) unless".

When Abaya joined the table, reporters sought his comment about his incoming prime position in the Armed Forces.

The President immediately burst into laughter and repeated, "I did not say it . . . but I don't deny it."

A blushing Abaya merely smiled looking at the President.

"I can't thank you enough Ma'am," was all Abaya could say.

"General Abaya is really (being) groomed to assume the position, we just don't know when," Reyes told reporters in an interview at the AFP Medical Center where he visited Air force crewmen who were hurt in a helicopter crash the other day.

'Best man for job'

Military personnel in Mindanao were jubilant following the President's announcement.

"He deserves it because he is one of the best in the Philippine military. Not only is he a decorated officer, Gen. Abaya is well respected by many," Army Sgt. Nicolas Santos said.

Military commanders in Mindanao also backed Abaya describing him as "the best man for the job."

Ver aide

Abaya, a former aide of Marcos henchman Gen. Fabian Ver, isn't retireable until Oct. 29, 2004.

Abaya took over the Southern Command after its head, Lt. Gen. Ernesto Carolina, was relieved and posted back in Camp Aguinaldo as AFP deputy chief of staff.

A native of Caoyan, Ilocos Sur, Abaya graduated from the elite military school, the US Military Academy at West Point in 1971 and continued his schooling in the United States where he took up a masteral course in engineering up to 1973.

When he returned to the Philippines during the martial law years, he was assigned to engineering units up to 1975 when he was transferred to the National Intelligence and Security Authority or Nisa.

In 1977, he was detailed with the Marcos' Presidential Security Command where he served until 1981.

He went on to serve as aide-de-camp of then AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver up to May 22, 1982.

During his stint with Ver, he also served as president of Mindanao Steel Corp.

He was then assigned to the Office of the Armed Forces Attache for four years before going to the field in 1988 as the executive officer of the 403rd Army Brigade.

In 1989, he became battalion commander of the 8th IB, and later the commanding officer of Task Force Falcon until December 1989.

In 1990, he was a member of the reinstatement board which processed military rebels. He was next assigned as the commandant at the Philippine Military Academy after which he had a series of headquarters jobs.

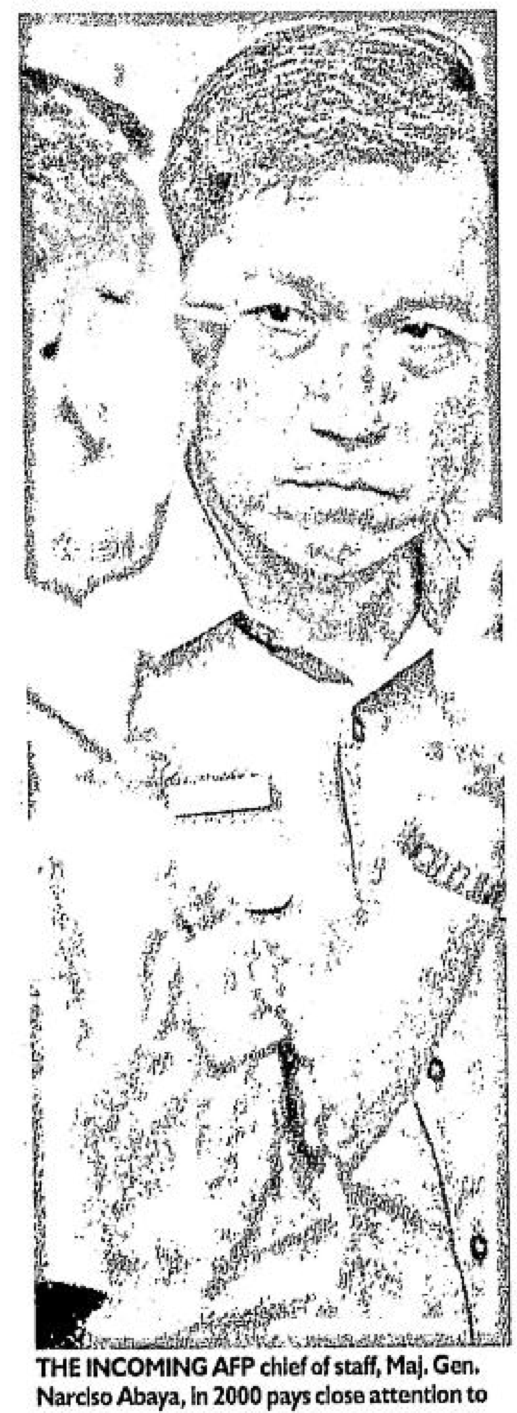
In 1995, he went back to the field as brigade commander of the 102nd Brigade before becoming the senior assistant of Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat.

Prominence

In 1999, he headed the 1st Infantry Division and gained prominence in 2000 for the duration of the five-month-long Sipadan kidnapping of the mostly foreign hostages.

Abaya has also been credited with the rescue of Filipinos and foreigners kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf in 2002 and 2001.

He was promoted AFP deputy chief of staff but was sent back to Mindanao in March 2001 as commanding general of the Southern Luzon Command based in Zamboanga City.



THE INCOMING AFP chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Narciso Abaya, in 2000 pays close attention to then AFP Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes. PDI FILE PHOTO

STORIES FROM ROME

Italian police seize 64 fighting cocks

ROME—Italian police on Tuesday seized sixty-four Bantam fighting cocks in an upmarket residential area of Rome, police said.

The haul was the first of its kind in Italy. Police said the birds were probably brought into the country specially to take part in illegal cockfights.

The cocks were found inside a shack in the Flaminio quarter, home to many Filipino household employees.

Gambling on cockfights is popular within the Filipino community, according to police.

A 43-year-old woman, who was watching over the birds, has been charged with mistreating animals.

Police also seized a case containing multicolored balls of string, of the kind used to mark birds during the fight. *AFP*

Love, not diet, is key to weight loss, says mag

From page A1

ians find that a new love interest is the best way for both men and women to get into shape, *"Dimagrire"* (Lose Weight) said in its February issue.

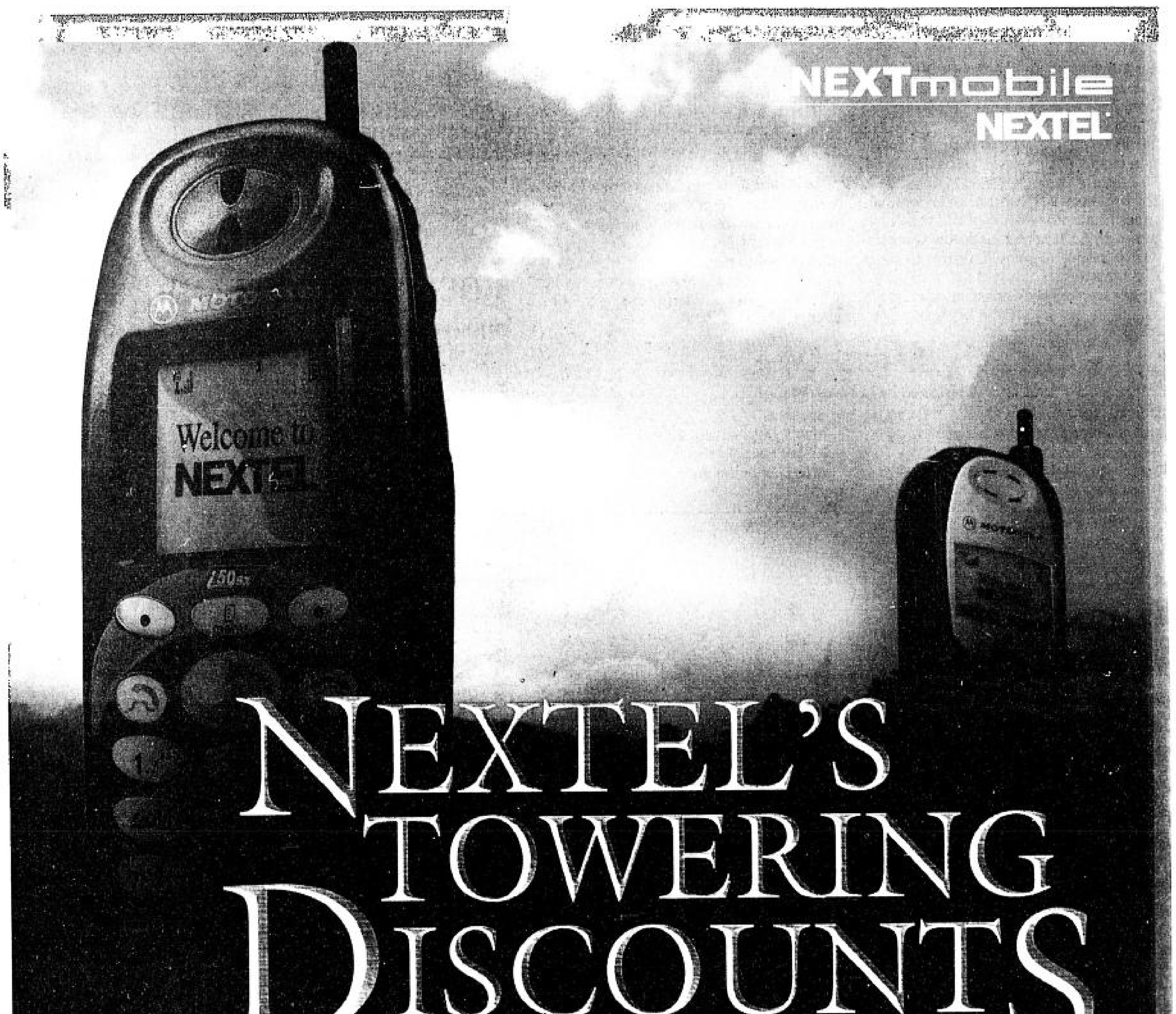
The respondents talked to 74 Italian weight loss experts for the article.

Chocolate, other sweets and carbohydrates stimulate neurotransmitters that cause a general feeling of well-being, but also pile on the calories, one nutritionist said.

"So, if being in love brings the same happiness, the organism doesn't need these foods to achieve well-being," Amleto D'Amicis was quoted as saying.

But the slimming effects of romance don't last forever. For a third of Italians, the pounds stay off only until marriage and for 23 percent, a first child can bring those love handles back on for both mama and papa.

A lucky few—about 12 percent—never put weight back on. *Reuters*



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i700p	₱ 7,300	₱ 3,800	₱2,000	₱11,400	Free	₱17,100	Free	₱20,040	Free	₱1,060
i1000p	₱ 9,100	₱ 3,800	₱3,800	₱11,400	₱1,800	₱17,100	Free	₱20,040	Free	₱1,060
i50sx	₱ 9,600	₱ 3,800	₱4,300	₱11,400	₱2,300	₱17,100	Free	₱20,040	Free	₱1,230
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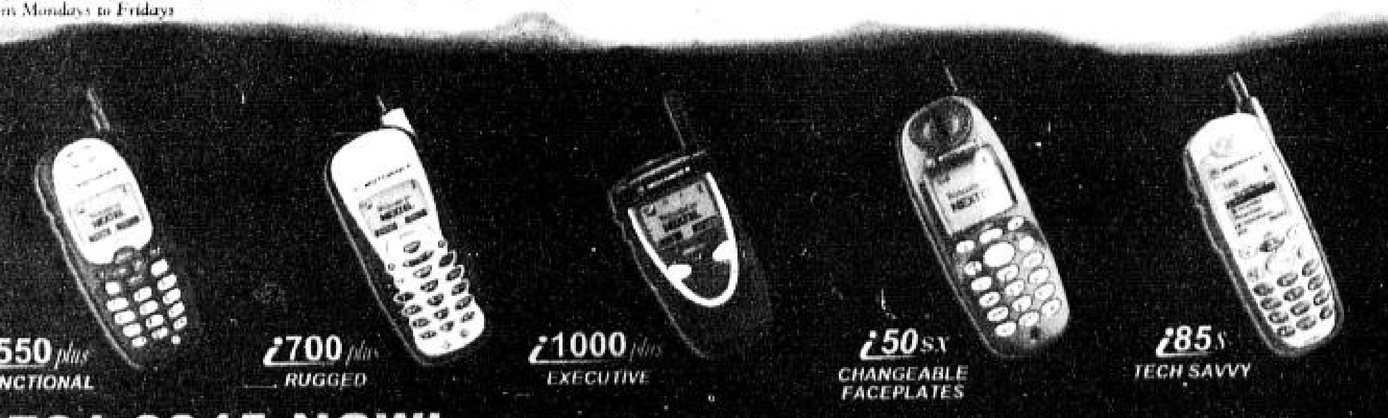

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Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ● *Assistant Editor* **Edwin M. Villanueva**

Usoc head urged to quit

LAS VEGAS—The top leadership of the US Olympic Committee urged Usoc president Marty Mankamyer to resign Tuesday, blaming her for infighting within the organization and claiming she conspired with a staff member to try and force CEO Lloyd Ward from his job. *AP*

BEST-OF-5 AFFAIR

Welcoat-Dazz PBL series on today

By Dennis U. Eroa

GAMES TODAY *(Lucena City)*
3:15 p.m.—Blu Detergent vs LBC (best-of-3 for third)
5:15 p.m.—Welcoat vs Dazz (best-of-5 championship)

WHETHER it's going to be a long series or not, rival coaches Leo Austria and Junel Baculi agree on one thing:

Winning Game One is going to set the tone of the best-of-five PBL Challenge Cup title showdown.

"We want to start our bid on a high note," said Welcoat mentor Leo Austria. "I'm sure coach Junel also thinks this way."

Welcoat, looking for its fifth title but first under Austria, and title-hungry Dazz clash today in an out-of-town game at the Quezon Convention Center in Lucena City. Gametime is set at 5:15 p.m.

In the first game at 3:15 p.m., Blu meets LBC-Batangas in their own best-of-three series for third.

The bemoustached Austria, an ex-seminarian and former PBA rookie of the year, hails from nearby Sariaya and his fellow Quezonians are expected to come in droves to cheer the Paintmasters.

"Thanks to the Lord's grace, my players are all healthy," Austria told the INQUIRER yesterday as his charges ate lunch in scenic Tayabas, 20 minutes away from Lucena, the capital of Quezon Province.

Two of the country's up and coming slotmen–Welcoat's Romel Adducul and Dazz's John Ferriols–will renew their rivalry. But the clash isn't simply the battle of towering players, it's also about character.

Baculi, who gave Welcoat all its four crowns and steered Dazz to the 1996 Reinforced plum, has the luxury of shuffling 12 players, giving him the edge in case the series drags on to five games.

"Dazz is a very hungry team," noted Welcoat co-owner Raymond Yu." The series may go either way."

Cyrus Baguio, Peter June Simon, Eugene Tan, Allan Salangsang are all capable of making the crucial plays, while supporting Ferriols are Alwyn Espiritu, Ricky Natividad, Francis Mercado and Joel Dualan.

Austria has pinned his hopes largely on a strong first five (Paul Artadi, Adducul, Ronald Tubid, Ariel Capus and Eddie Laure). Calijohn Orfrecio, Marc Pingris and Dom Yabut come from the bench to relieve the starters.

Austria and Baculi like to motivate their charges in different ways. Baculi possesses a volcanic temper, while Austria does it silently, like a chesser pondering the moves of his rival.

SPORTSTV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Denver vs New York, 8:30 a.m. (r - 10 p.m.), Solar Sports, San Antonio vs Memphis, 7 p.m., IBC 13

World Pro Basketball Challenge, 5:30 p.m. (r), ESPN

17th ABC Championship for Junior Men 2002, 6 p.m. (r), Star Sports

TENNIS: Australian Open, 2 p.m., Solar Sports

BOXING: Friday Night Fights, 10 p.m., ESPN

World Class Championship Boxing, 10 p.m. (r), Star Sports

ANITO BRIONES
BABE RUTH
57TH HOME RUN
IWAMURA AKINORI
MAY 3, 1996
C. GEHRINGER
59TH HOME RUN
PARK JUNG HWAN

CHAMPIONSHIP SPOILER
UP's Jessie Natanuan (right) dives to second base as La Salle's Jonard Pareja readies to tag him during the UAAP men's baseball tournament yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Baseball Stadium. UP stunned La Salle, 6-4, denying the Green Archers a 10-game sweep and the outright championship. UP finished with an 8-2 card and will enjoy the twice-to-beat privilege with La Salle in the crossover semifinals where they will be facing Adamson and UST, respectively, starting on Jan. 26 at the same venue. JESS YUSON

Locsin, others end up as practice players

By June Navarro

LEFT with no team to run to, a hoard of PBA players have either been forced to retire or settle down as practice players.

So far, the latter choice remains a more viable option for Noli Locsin, Noy Falcasantos, Jay Mendoza, Ronald Magtulis, Rob Wainwright, Bonel Balingit and Zaldy Realubit as most PBA teams, if not all, have already completed their lineups.

Player-agent Danny Espiritu said these cagers along with Richard Del Rosario, Mike Orquillias, Jovy Sese, Art Del Rosario and Biboy Simon are now looking at the prospects of settling as practice players than get no compensation at all.

Meanwhile, point guard Boyet Fernandez signed a two-year pact with the Purefoods TJ Hotdogs. The 5-foot-8 Fernandez has agreed to a pay cut of almost 25 percent from his salary last year. He earned P215,000 a month last season.

CARTER
15
MO GAME

mo jimmys
mo: a slang term for /more/
jimmys: a jump shot. example: that kid's jimmy is smooth.

mo cookies
mo: a slang term for /more/
cookies: used in reference to stealing a basketball. example: he stole his cookies!

mo dimes
mo: a slang term for /more/
dimes: an american coin with a value of ten pennies that in the context of basketball means an assist. example: did you see that pass? he dropped a dime.

mo shakes
mo: a slang term for /more/
shakes: the result of several basketball moves and fakes by a dribbling offensive player which has caused a defender to try to go into more than one direction at the same time.

mo boom
mo: a slang term for /more/
boom: a powerful, loud, and emphatic dunk shot. example: i boomed on you, man!

mo cleaning glass
mo: a slang term for /more/
cleaning glass: to rebound a basketball. originated due to the fact most backboards are made of plexiglas, and many players use big swiping motions to gather rebounds.

mo game
mo: a slang term for /more/
game: what a multi-skilled player has when he wears the nike shox voll. its full-length shox technology provides the responsive energy you need to shake, shoot jimmys, steal cookies, drop dimes, boom and clean glass.

nike.com/nikeshox

Roddick bundles out Aynaoui in epic battle

Serena, Kim arrange semifinal duel

MELBOURNE, Australia—Andy Roddick beat Younes El Aynaoui in an epic five-set match to move into the semifinals at the Australian Open.

In one of the longest matches in the Open era, Roddick saved a match point and then, 1 hour, 50 minutes later and serving for the match a second time, the 20-year-old American held for a 4-6, 7-6 (5), 4-6, 6-4, 21-19. The match lasted four hours, 59 minutes.

It was the longest men's singles match at the Australian Open since tiebreak sets were introduced into Grand Slam events in 1971, beating the mark set by Yannick Noah of France in his 6-7, 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, 16-14 win over Roger Smith in 1988. That match lasted 73 games.

At 2:23, it was the longest fifth set in the Open era, beating Mark Philippoussis' 4-6, 6-3, 6-7 (7) 7-6 (4), 20-18 win over Sjeng Schalken in the third round at Wimbledon in 2000.

Roddick was the youngest player into quarters this time, after he rallied from two sets down against Mikhail Youzhney to win in five for his first defeat of the Russian Davis Cup hero.

El Aynaoui, seeded 18th, was aiming to he the first Moroccan into a Grand Slam semifinal.

CLIJSTERS celebrates her 6-2, 6-4 win over Myskina. AFP

He advanced to the last eight on an upset win over No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt, when he didn't drop serve once in a four-set win.

With Andre Agassi, 32, and Wayne Ferreira, 31, already in the semis, the Australian Open had been shaping as a veteran's event.

Roddick becomes the youngest semifinalist at Melbourne Park in 11 years, advancing to the last four at a major for the first time.

He'll meet Rainer Schuettler in the semis after the 26-year-old German ousted Wimbledon runnerup David Nalbandian 6-3, 5-7, 6-1, 6-0 in the other quarterfinal.

Earlier, Serena Williams moved two wins away from the "Serena Slam."

Standing in her way is Kim Clijsters, the last player to beat Williams or her sister Venus.

Serena Williams reached the Australian Open semifinals with a 6-2, 6-2 victory Wednesday over Meghann Shaughnessy, whose drop shot led to the twisted ankle that kept Williams out of last year's tournament.

Clijsters, who beat both Williams sisters to win the WTA Tour Championship last November, advanced with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Anastasia Myskina. *AP*

Letran netters prevail

DEFENDING champion Letran thumped University of Perpetual Help-Rizal, 3-0, last Tuesday for its second straight win in the 78th National Collegiate Athletic Association tennis tournament at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Menandro Econg demolished Dennis Canaria, 6-1, 6-1, in the first singles, Michael Mantua and Felizaroz Econg won the doubles over Harvy Morse and Canaria, 6-0, 6-1, and Carlito Rojo clobbered John Motol, 8-1, in the second singles.

Earlier, College of St. Benilde downed the Mapua Institute of Technology, 2-1.

2 Pinoys top motocross bets in UAE

CALTEX-KTM-REVTEX star riders Glenn Aguilar and Bebet dela Cruz lead a four-man Philippine team to the 2003 FIM (Federacion Internationale de Motorcyclisme) Motocross Continental Championship at the Umm Al Quwain, United Arab Emirates tomorrow, Jan. 24.

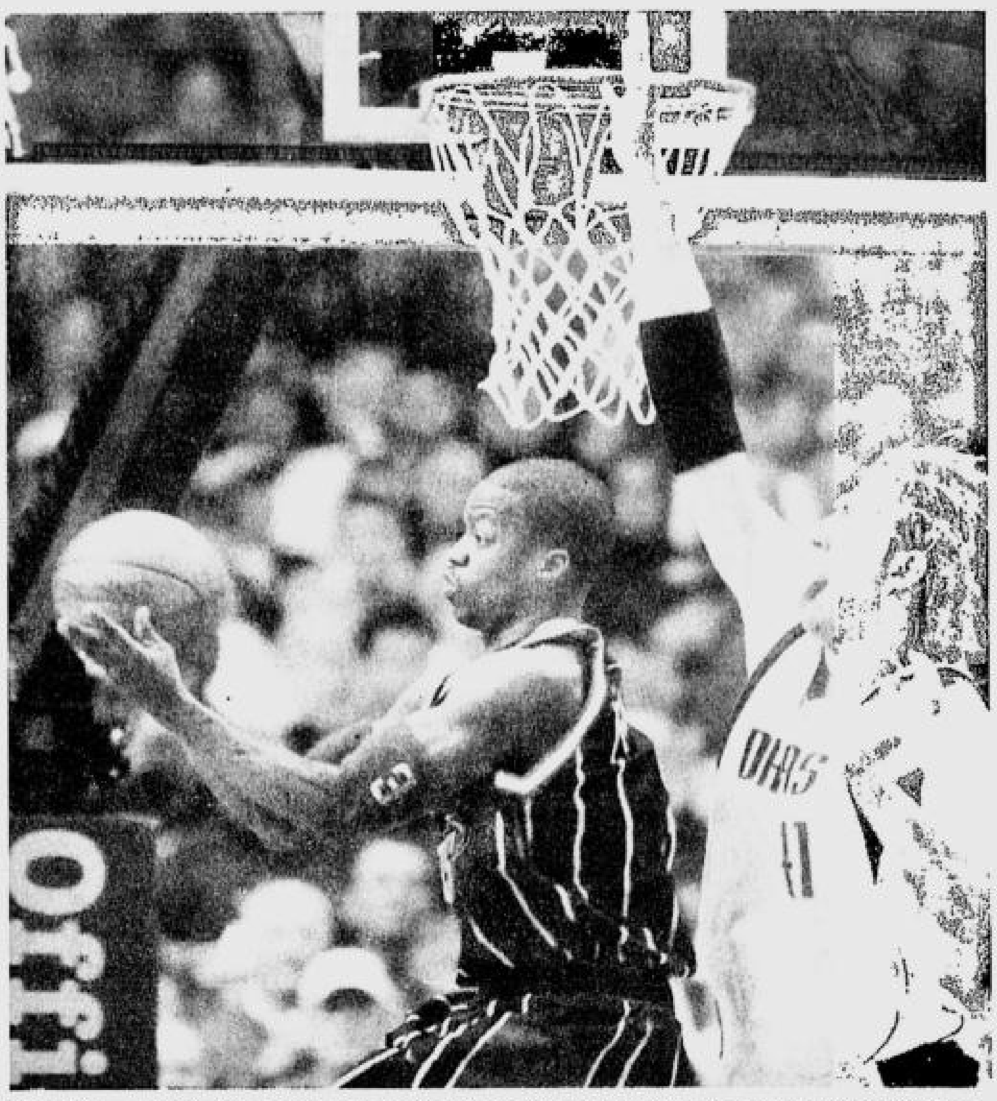
Aguilar, No. 3 in the Asian standings, will have his hands full against the best riders from Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Malaysia, India, Sri Lanka, Singapore and the middle east nations in the one-day race opening FIM's 2003 season.

The six-time national rider of the year will also have a chance to test his latest KTM 2003 bike in the UAE event, which awards $1,000 to the first placer.

The two Caltex riders are being sent to UAE under the auspices of the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (NAMSSA), headed by its president Macky Carapiet, who shall also act as the RP team's delegation head.

"I am confident of a good showing there because of my new bike, which is the latest and strongest of its kind in the sports today," said Aguilar, who is also supported by Dreambikes, Oakley, Pro Grip and HJC Helmets.

Even Dela Cruz, the up-and-coming Caltex No. 2 rider known for his daredevil maneuvers, is upbeat of his chances, vowing to make an impression right in his very first taste of international competition.



STEVE Francis (left) of the Houston Rockets drives to the basket but is foiled by Dirk Nowitzki of the Dallas Mavericks during their NBA game yesterday. The Mavericks won, 107-86. AFP

RP: ₱1.5B for Games

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINES will have to spend $30 million or roughly P1.5 billion just to construct or refurbish the main venue of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

But whether the country will build a new sports complex or massively repair existing ones remains a big question which the Philippine SEAG organizers committee failed to answer during its meeting yesterday.

Either way, the committee estimated that the main venue and satellite sites will cost $30 million.

Philsoc member Robert Aventajado, who is also chair of the Philippine Olympic Committee, said once the committee decides to build or repair, it can start to choose among the six bidding cities and provinces.

The only thing that is clear, according to Aventajado, is that the SEA Games will have a main venue and sub sites, which is what Kuala Lumpur did in the 2001 edition.

Vietnam has at least four venues, with Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh as the main venues. Among the bidders are Manila, which has the 70-year-old Rizal Memorial Sports Complex; Bacolod-Iloilo which boasts of the Panaad Sports Complex, and Lanao del Norte, which just unveiled the world-class Mindanao Civic Center in Tubod.

Cebu, Naga City. Clark in Pampanga and Socsargen also made their bids to host the Games.

The main concern of the organizers are the lack of a warm-up pool and a stadium big enough to meet the Southeast Asian standards, according to Aventajado.

Among the Philsoc members are Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain, Rep. Monico Puentevella, Executive Sec. Alberto Romulo, Finance Sec. Jose Isidro Camacho and Tourism Sec. Richard Gordon.

Mavericks contain Yao, rout Rockets, 107-86

DALLAS — Dirk Nowitzki scored 12 of his 26 points during a gamebreaking second quarter Tuesday and Raef LaFrentz contained Yao Ming, helping the Dallas Mavericks end a three-game losing streak with a 107-86 victory over the listless Houston Rockets.

Returning home from a dismal West Coast trip, Dallas drilled its first four shots — all long jumpers — and led by 12 points early. Although Houston briefly went ahead, Nowitzki helped the Mavericks grab control by moving the offense down low.

Nowitzki rebounded from a scoreless first quarter to score eight of Dallas' first nine in the second period, starting with a layup off a great spin move. The Mavericks went on to outscore the Rockets 29-13 in the quarter.

Their lead peaked at 24 in the third. Houston capitalized on sloppy play by Dallas to make a 12-0 run, but never got closer than 12 in losing for the second straight time since an exciting overtime victory over the Los Angeles Lakers.

Magic 103, Cavaliers 94

In Cleveland, Tracy McGrady scored 35 points to spoil Keith Smart's coaching debut with Cleveland, leading Orlando to the victory.

McGrady came in as the league's leading scorer at 30 points per game, and he had matched that with 6:55 remaining in the third quarter with a pair of free throws.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas led Cleveland with a career-high 35 points, but the Cavs, who have lost 11 of 13, didn't play much better with Smart calling the shots as they had with Lucas for the first 42 games this season.

Kings 109, Nets 102

In Sacramento, California, Chris Webber had 36 points, 15 rebounds and eight assists and all five Sacramento starters scored in double figures, as the Kings claimed a victory over New Jersey.

COMPLETE RESULTS

Orlando 103, Cleveland 94; Dallas 107, Houston 86; Sacramento 109, New Jersey 102. AFP

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Pilgrim 2. Love Triangle/Full Blast 3. Marginal Note
Race 2--1. Hyper Bogi 2. Festive Charm 3. Kusang Loob 4. Sandstorm 5. Dalanginan
Race 3--1. Dynasouls 2. Assunta de Rio 3. Gossip Column 4. Silver Flyer
Race 4--1. Silakbo 2. Highly Connected 3. Gold Honors 4. Hotrod 5. Very Sharp
Race 5--1. Don Benito 2. Make Your Mark 3. May's Magic 4. Tanging Ikaw 5. Flirt
Race 6--1. Twin Brother 2. Bronte 3. Native Prince 4. Dot Com
Race 7--1. Cheese Laffonga 2. Ocean Magic 3. Green Leaves 4. Golden Tale 5. I Dare You
Race 8–1. Vice Free 2. Inner Silence 3. Carolina Belle 4. Grande Ecole 5. Tervalac
Race 9–1. Adam's Call 2. Playing With Fire 3. Dynamite Miss 4. Kaboom 5. Proud Conquistador

Fai joins high school chessfest Feb. 7

THE FIRST Asia Institute (FAI), a world-class Institution of higher learning and research located in Tanauan City, Batangas leads the early entries for the first-ever High School Chess Team Open tournament which unfolds at 4 p.m. on Feb. 7 at the multi-purpose gymnasium of the Philippine Science High School (PSHS), Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Joining FAI are the Philippine Science High School, South Ridge Muntinlupa, International Christian Academy, Ateneo de Manila, Ramon Magsaysay High School, Rizal Technological University, University of the East, University of Santo Tomas, San Beda College, St. Jude, Angono National High School, Parañaque National High School La Huerta Annex and Xavier School.

Expected to participate, among others, in this three-day event are De La Salle, San Sebastian, Mapua, University of the Philippines, Letran, Adamson, Lagro National High School, St. Mary's College, T. Paez High School, Emilio Aguinaldo High School, Far Eastern University, National University and Jose Rizal University.

A half-day chess workshop for Principals, P.E. coordinators, coaches and team captains of participating school will be conducted by Grandmaster Eugene Torre starting at 1 p.m. on Feb. 6 at the auditorium of the Advance Science and Technology Building of the PSHS.

Registration for the tournament is being accepted at the ACCA secretariat, 8th Floor PDCP Bank Centre, Leviste corner Rufino Sts., Salcedo Village, Makati City with tel. nos. 892-8759 and 892-9091 (ask for Saniata Lachica or Robert Suelo Jr) or e-mail: acca@info.com.ph

Thorpe misses world record

STOCKHOLM—Australian Ian Thorpe powered to 400 meter freestyle gold at the Fina World Cup on Tuesday, but missed breaking the world record by just five hundredths of a second. Thorpe, who broke the World Cup record he set in Sydney three years ago by more than a second, destroyed his rivals, finishing in three minutes 34.63 seconds–nearly nine seconds quicker than Romania's Dragos Coman in second place. *REUTERS*

Mandaluyong derby today

FAST-PACED and quality encounters are the order of the day today as Mandaluyong Coliseum presents another big-time 5-cock derby, with the full backing of Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer, Sagupaan Mite Free, Complexor 3000 and Lakpue Drug Inc.

Proceeds of this fund-raising sports affair will be used to fund civic projects of the Rotary Club of New Manila, according to Ucap president Raymond Velayo who is supporting the derby.

Seeing action today are OPMI president Vic Yu, Biboy Enriquez, Mauro Prieto, Butch and Jake Macasaet, Vic Boy and Muroy Dolorico, Mario Villamor, lawyer Ram Lopez, Tony Litonjua, Boy Diaz, Sandy Javier, Butch Halili and Maj. Bobby Doromal, among others.

Meanwhile, regular hackfights will resume at Mandaluyong Coliseum tomorrow and on Saturday. Pit manager Renato Shio said the first 10 winners will get P1,000 each as bonus while the 11th to 30th winners get P500 each.

Also slated is the "Invictus 4-Cock Derby" on Jan. 28 to be hosted by lawyer Mario Antonio and the 5-cock derby on Jan. 30 (Vic Boy Group).

For details, call 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

Masbate barges into Coke semis

MASBATE held off a blistering rally by Baguio's Pines City High to win, 3-2, and barge into the semifinals of the all-Luzon Coke Go-for-Goal under 16-football finals yesterday at the Philsports field in Pasig City.

Mark Angelo Marcaida scored three goals to help the Masbate National Comprehensive High booters rule the three-team Group A with their second straight win in the tourney sponsored by Coca-Cola with Adidas as official ball.

Masbate blanked Rizal's Gen. Licerio Geronimo Memorial National High, 10-0, Tuesday.

Marcaida's third marker in the 86th minute spelled the difference after the Baguio squad had levelled the count at 2 on back-to-back goals by Jade Canlas and Nestor Udan in the 64th and 71st minutes, respectively.

Laguna's Pedro Guevarra National High School bounced back from an opening-day loss to crush Camarines Norte's Vinzons Pilot High, 8-1, in the second game.

Eliezer Fabroda drilled in four goals and Jeffrey Purisma added three as the Laguna boys kept their semifinal chances alive.

Fabroda struck in the 15th, 22nd, 71st and 72nd minutes while Purisma delivered in the 11th, 39th and 42nd minutes.

Jaime Honora produced Laguna's eighth goal in the 83rd.

Solar presents big bout Jan. 26

SOLAR Sports kicks off its series of boxing specials for 2003 with TV coverage of this Sunday's (Jan. 26) title bout between the sport's newest rising star, Vernon "The Viper" Forrest, and hard-punching Ricardo Mayorga for the unified WBC/WBA Welterweight World Championship. Solar will air the fight on Sunday, 8 p.m., on IBC-13.

The 31-year-old Forrest, the WBC Welterweight World Champion, is undefeated in 12 years as a pro fighter, with 32 wins, including 26 coming via knockout. He became boxing's newest sensation in 2002, after two convincing victories over long-reigning welterweight champion "Sugar" Shane Mosley.

On Jan. 26, in front of a packed crowd at New York's Madison Square Garden, the so-called Mecca of boxing, Forrest shocked the boxing world with his masterful dominance of Mosley. He floored Mosley twice in the second round (for the first time in his career) and again in the 10th. The final decision was a unanimous and overwhelming triumph by Forrest.

In the July 20 rematch, Forrest impressed critics with his superior boxing skills along with an arsenal of body shots, right hooks and uppercuts. He again conquered Mosley to stake his claim as the best welterweight fighter in the world.

His opponent this Sunday, 29-year-old Ricardo Mayorga of Nicaragua, is an offensive-minded slugger who lives up to his colorful nickname of "El Matador." He captured the WBA welterweight title with a 5th round TKO over Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis on March 30 last year. Mayorga has 22 knockouts out of his 24 victories, and only has three defeats and one draw.

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Siodina, Pagunsan grab lead; injured Miñoza quits

CAGAYAN DE ORO—It was the turn of Mario Siodina and Rey Pagunsan to share the top spot yesterday halfway through the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit at the ic Pueblo de Oro course here.

Siodina, still showing some sting at 54, flashed the same deadly putting touch which helped carry him to a glorious past in scoring a three-under-par 69. Pagunsan, returning to the local tour after trying his luck in Japan, checked in with a 70.

With similar 140 aggregates for 36 holes, the two held a one-stroke lead over a rejuvenated Mars Pucay, who boosted his bid to become the first back-to-back winner of the tour bankrolled by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and San Miguel Beer by firing a 71.

At 141, Pucay was just a shade ahead of Vic Santia (71-142) as the chase for the P100,000 top purse at stake in this event organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines, Inc. remained tight with 14 players separated by just five strokes or less.

Frankie Miñoza, the hometown hero touted to treat the Cagayan folk to a confidence-boosting victory he has not tasted for almost two years now, will not get that chance as he was forced to withdraw after nine holes due to an injury.

Miñoza, 42, showed up with a heavily bandaged right wrist yesterday and quit without even holing out on the ninth green.

"He told me that the wrist was aching and didn't want to gamble on getting a more serious injury," said tournament director Andy Maglipon.

Baguio Ladies golfest begins

BAGUIO CITY—The 28th Baguio Ladies Interclub golf tournament starts today at the par-61 Baguio Country Club here.

Among the teams seeing action in the three-day (54-hole) tournament are: Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, Forest Hills, Riviera Golf and Country Club, Valley Golf, Philippine Navy, Villamor GC, Aguinaldo, Baguio Ladies Open Golf Association and Baguio Country Club.

Host BCC is the defending champion in Class A, B and C.

Teener shines

WIE

HONOLULU—The moment was Hoganesque, although it had more to do with curiosity than perfection.

Michelle Wie was on the practice range at Waialae Country Club before the Pro-Junior Golf Challenge at the Sony Open. She started with her wedges and worked her way through the bag until she pulled out a driver.

That's when PGA Tour players — five on each side of her — stopped what they were doing to watch. With her long, fluid swing, the Hawaiian teenager cracked one drive after another toward the back end of the range, some of them approaching 300 yards.

Why all the interest?

Wie is only 13, and she might be the biggest youth sensation in golf since a kid named Tiger Woods appeared on the "Mike Douglas Show" at age 2.

The pros murmured after each drive struck by the eighth-grader, who is nearly 6 feet.

Wie already is one of the biggest sports celebrities in Hawaii. *AP*

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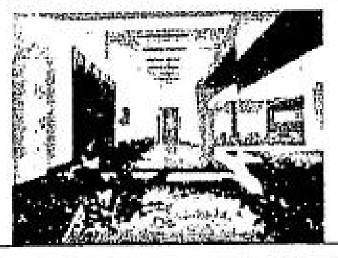
Garden in the city. At the Columns, Ayala Avenue, nature communes with urban living. Its design creates an open-space environment and relaxing surroundings. The interplay of greens and Zen gardens that adorn the Grand Lobbies of each tower give a soothing experience to residents and guests alike.



Three towers of power. Three towers on a continuous podium level define The Columns, Ayala Avenue. Each tower will have 30 storeys, 23 of which will be residential. The five-level upper ground parking is shielded from the outside by an artwork that gives the building prominence along Ayala and Buendia Avenues.

The layout maximizes the advantages of its prominent site, which allows more units to be facing the morning sun while avoiding the afternoon heat. Natural lighting and good ventilation are also taken into consideration in each of the studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom residential units - a rare feature among residential condominiums.

To create a more open feel for space, select units even have bay windows; others have balconies overlooking the city. The top three levels will house very private units, which have breath-taking scenery.

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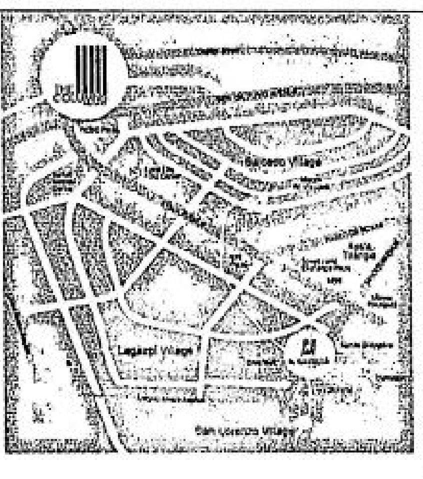

To make it even more fascinating, the ground floor will have landscaped plazas, a row of cafes and al fresco dining spots, indeed the perfect setting for unwinding after a day's busy schedule.

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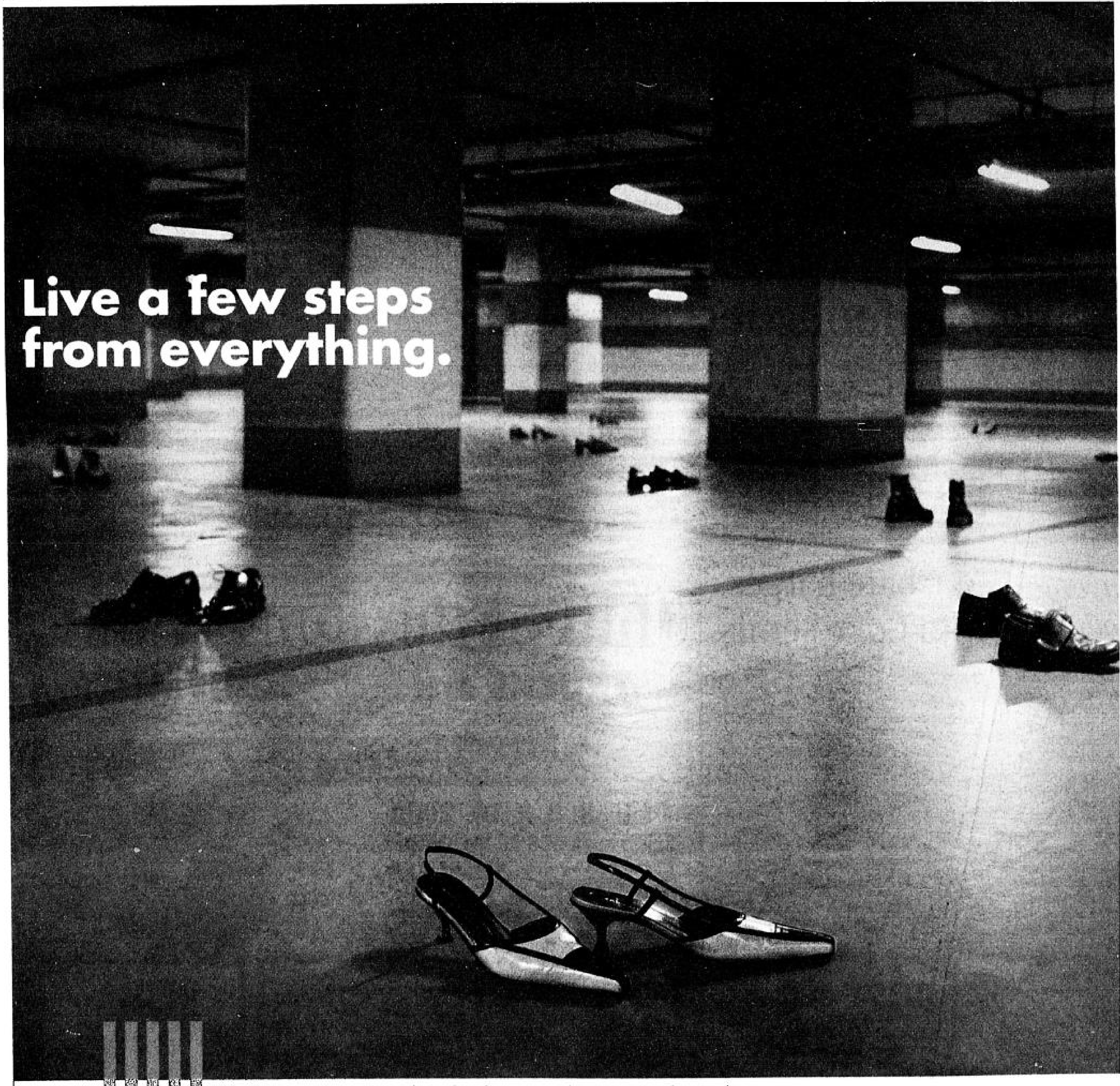

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■ **PARSONS: 2nd encounter of the bloody kind** A20

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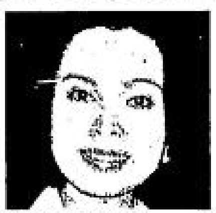


■ **Loren, Noli given 10 days to explain television stints** A20

ABDULRAHMAN

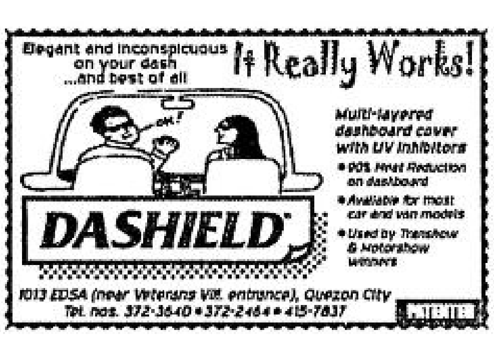
■ 'When a Muslim draws, he shoots' A20

Muslim leader sounds out warning to ill-tempered motorists

LLAMAS

■ 'Who said Jay dared the gunman?' A20

Lawyers of slain Ateneo law graduate say he was a pacifist



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TOYOTA

Sonny Parsons: Second encounter of the bloody kind

By Nelson Flores

SIX months after losing two men in a gun battle, suspected members of the Akyat Bahay Gang members again attacked actor Sonny Parsons in Marikina yesterday, the former city councilor told police.

Parsons, Jose Nabiola in real life, claimed he shot at the gang members whom he caught casing his house.

According to Parsons, he was about to sleep at 2:45 a.m. when he noticed an unidentified man reconnoitering their house, located at the corner of Bronze and Rainbow Streets in SSS Village.

Parsons said the man, wearing a black bonnet, was was trying to peep into his daughter's bedroom when he accosted him.

"I immediately went out of the house via Bronze Street and accosted the unidentified man but I was immediately met with gunfire prompting me to retaliate," the 45-year old Parsons explained.

Parsons said the man was clutching what seemed to be a hand grenade.

Parsons said he was able to shoot and hit the unidentified man in the chest at least twice.

To his surprise, Parsons said another man armed with an Armalite rifle quickly grabbed the apparently wounded man and pushed him on board a waiting red Nissan Sentra car with no registration plates.

The car then sped away, Parsons said.

"I am positive that I hit the man with the bonnet but he may be wearing a bullet proof vest hence there was no trace of blood in the place where I hit him," Parsons said.

Sr. Supt. Leonardo Espina,. Marikina City police chief, said a bag with a fragmentation grenade and live ammunition for .45 caliber pistol were recovered.

He added that nine spent shells of .45 caliber pistol were also found in the scene.

Espina said his men were still investigating the incident. He also appealed to all hospitals and clinics to immediately report any gunshot-wound related treatment to the police.

Espina said the red Nissan car had figured in a number of robberies in Antipolo and Quezon Cities and San Mateo, Rizal. He said occupants of the car were sometimes using the registration plates CPW 842 and CPF 506 to mislead the authorities.

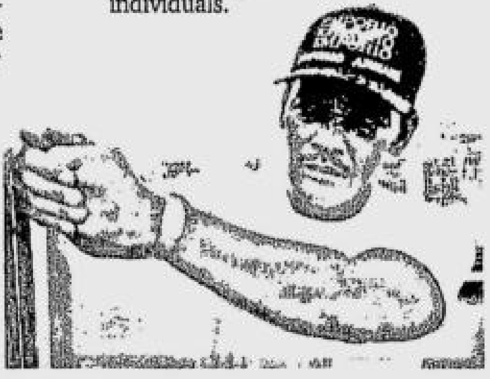
"The public could send their information regarding the robbers to the police via text at 2910 and 2920 or if they are in Marikina they can call 161," Espina said.

Parsons said he believed surviving members of the gang that he encountered last year were the ones who tried to enter his house anew.

He noted that the same red Nissan car was used as get-away vehicle in the first encounter.

He claimed it was apparent that the gang members were out to avenge the death of their two companions.

Parsons said he has received reports that the gang is under the protection of very powerful individuals.



SONNY Parsons

Judge asks Loren, Noli to defend stint as television hosts

By Jerome Aning

A MANILA judge has given Senators Loren Legarda and Noli de Castro 10 days to explain why they should not be barred from hosting television shows.

The order, dated Jan. 21, was issued yesterday by Judge Placido Marquez of the Manila RTC Branch 40.

In a petition for declaratory relief, the lawyers' group Social Justice Society asked the court to rule whether mediamen who were elected as senators should be banned from exercising their profession.

SJS president Samson Alcantara said Section 7 of the Republic Act No. 6713, or the code of conduct and ethical standards for public officials and employees, declares unlawful for any public official and employee to "engage in private practice of their profession unless authorized by the Constitution or law, provided that such practice will not conflict or tend to conflict with official functions."

Alcantara said it is "of paramount interest" that the issue be resolved since the Constitution does not expressly authorize a mediaman elected as senator to continue hosting TV shows during his incumbency.

The SJS wants the RTC to rule whether or not De Castro and Legarda's hosting of TV shows is an exercise of profession and thus prohibited by RA 6713.

The lawyers group is also pursuing a similar case against Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos, Pampanga Gov. Lito Lapid and Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez.

Force vowed as PTA leadership row drags

DEAN Barbers, the Malacañang-recognized GM of the Philippine Tourism Authority, yesterday tried but again failed to evict an officer appointed by former President Joseph Estrada to the same position.

Barbers issued a memorandum asking his rival Nixon Kua and the latter's staff to vacate the offices designated for the PTA general manager on the sixth floor of the Department of Tourism building in Manila.

"I need the office since I am the functioning general manager; Mr. Kua is not signing anymore checks and vouchers and his orders are no longer being followed by the PTA employees and officials," Barbers claimed.

But Kua vowed not to give up the office as PTA chief until the Court of Appeals has decided on the legality of Barbers' appointment.

Barbers said he was forced to issue the memo because Kua had rejected verbal requests to vacate the office.

"If he still refuses to leave, then I'll start thinking about using force to bodily remove him from that office," he said.

"We'll see about that," Kua replied when asked by reporters for comment.

Kua said the order was illegal in the first place since the CA has yet to rule on the case.

He described that memo as nothing but a "continuing tactic employed by the so-called 'powers that be' to intimidate me from my cause of defending the PTA Charter."

"We are not surprised by Mr. Barbers' actions," Kua said. "One who is installed through violation of the rule of law must likewise preserve himself by continuously violating the rule of law."

Jerome Aning

'When a Muslim draws, he shoots'

By Christian V. Esguerra

A MUSLIM leader yesterday warned ill-tempered and arrogant motorists in the wake of the cold-blooded slay of Ateneo law graduate Jose Ramon Llamas.

"When a Muslim draws, he shoots," Prof. Taha Basman, president of the Philippine Islamic Council, explained.

Basman was however quick to vow that he would help track down Llamas' alleged killer, Bashir Abdulrahman.

Basman said that the incident should also "enlighten" the public in dealing with Muslims.

"Never dare a Muslim to draw his gun because he would not hesitate to shoot once he does that. That's part of the Islamic culture," Basman told the INQUIRER.

The Muslim scholar was reacting to accounts by National Bureau of Investigation witnesses that it was Llamas who had provoked the killer into shooting the victim.

The accounts strengthened that of another witness who had told Pasay police that the killer blew his top when Llamas did not bother to pull over after his car had hit the man's motorcycle.

Basman however clarified that the Muslim community was not sympathizing with nor justifying the man's act of killing the 26-year-old Llamas.

"We just want the incident to serve as a lesson to motorists. They should never lose their cool."

Basman said he and other Muslim leaders were silently checking Muslim communities in Metro Manila, particularly the Maharlika Village in Taguig and the Islamic Center in Quiapo, to help authorities hunt down Abdulrahman.

The initial suspect, Cola M. Didato, had pointed to Abdulrahman as the owner of the Kawasaki motorcycle left behind by the killer. When shown a picture of Abdulrahman, witnesses singled him out as the gunman.

ABDULRAHMAN

'Who said he dared the gunman?'

By Christian V. Esguerra

LAWYERS of Jose Ramon "Jay" Llamas' family yesterday demanded to know who claimed that it was the Ateneo law graduate who had provoked his assailant into shooting him.

"Who said he had dared the gunman to draw his gun? Those who know Jay were shocked (about the allegation). They've known him as soft-spoken and a pacifist. He could not have done that," said Vicente Verdadero, head of the three-man legal panel that would prosecute the case.

A check with the National Bureau of Investigation yesterday showed that no witness had claimed that Llamas had dared the gunman into shooting him, said Verdadero's fellow counsel Resty Meneses.

Quoting two witnesses, three NBI agents told the INQUIRER Tuesday that Llamas had uttered the following remark,. prompting the motorcycle man to shoot: "So you have a gun, draw it."

Meneses claimed the supposed statement was actually squealed to NBI agents by one Rodolfo Magadia, a member of the Pasay Traffic and Parking Bureau and a "second-hand source."

"Magadia told us that a fellow officer had told him about the remark. So it's plain and simple hearsay," Verdadero said.

NBI agents yesterday said Magadia was one of the two witnesses and that he had already executed a sworn statement.

Though the witnesses' allegation would practically have no bearing on the case, the lawyers pointed out that it "desecrated" the 26-year-old victim's reputation.

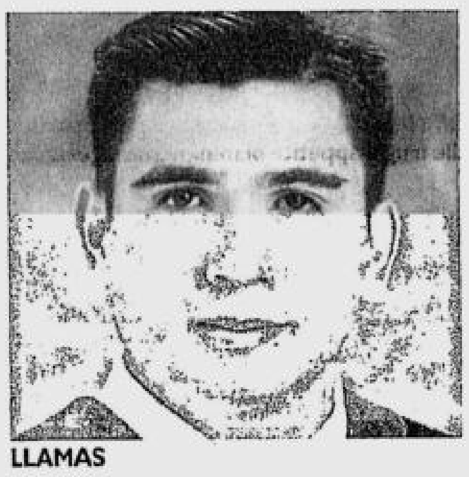
Police are set to file murder charges against Bashir Abdulrahman who had been identified by witnesses as the killer.

Senior Supt. Oscar Catalan, Pasay City police chief, said the suspect was last spotted in Palawan where he had fled with his family right after the shooting.

Abdulrahman is said to be the current owner of the Kawasaki motorcycle which was left behind by the gunman. The bike was initially owned by Cola Didato who had earlier been named prime suspect by the NBI.

In a sworn statement, a previous owner of the motorcycle described Abdulrahman as "ill-tempered."

Investigators yesterday also said Ishmael Bilal, brother-in-law of Abdulrahman, confirmed that he sold the Kawasaki motorcycle to the primary suspect.



LLAMAS

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, January 23, 2003
2nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 7:25-8:6
Gospel: Mk 3:7-12

Jesus and his disciples withdrew to the lakeside and a large crowd from Galilee followed him. A great number of people also came from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, Transjordan and from the region of Tyre and Sidon, for they had heard of all that he was doing.

Because of the crowd, Jesus told his disciples to have a boat ready for him, to prevent the people from crushing him. He healed so many that all who had diseases kept pressing towards him to touch him. Even the people who had evil spirits, whenever they saw him, would fall down before him and cry out, "You are the Son of God."

But he warned them sternly not to tell anyone who he was.

Commentary

There is majesty, an indescribable dignity to Jesus, in today's gospel. Here he is, the center of a virtual mob. They come from everywhere: not just from Galilee, but from a hundred miles away to the south, from Jerusalem and Judea; and even further south than that, from Idummaea, near Arabia. From the east side of Jordan, they come; and from the Northwest, from Gentile territory, from Tyre and Sidon, they come. The people who mob him, nearly crushing him to death as they rush forward to touch him, are people in pain. Amidst their sweat and noise, amidst the shrieking of the expelled demons, Jesus appears calm, unafraid, healing the sick, imposing silence on the demons with the authority of a sovereign. Where does this dignity, this combined self-possession and compassion of Jesus come from? What is its inner source?

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Neither here, nor there in Pandacan depot issue

By Jerome Aning

WILL the Pandacan oil depot be phased out or not?

As the fate of the mammoth fuel facility nestled in a thickly populated area hangs, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday assured Pandacan residents that the security of the district and of the city is "non-negotiable."

He would not compromise the security of the residents, Atienza vowed.

But Atienza fell short of stating categorically whether the facility would be phased out or be allowed to remain and continue operating.

In an interview, the mayor said he is "disappointed" at the failure of Caltex, Shell and Petron to fulfill their promise to reduce their operations.

"I did not see the best effort on their part to comply with the scale-down program we had agreed upon," Atienza said.

The mayor said he will express his misgivings in a letter he will send to the oil firm executives today.

Atienza said the oil firms should have at least reciprocated City Hall's efforts in addressing concerns that were raised in relation to the depot's operation.

He said that if he is given the choice, he would no longer entertain any appeal from the oil firms for any extension and would close down the depot himself.

But the mayor said he is keeping the door open because of the energy department's admonition that evicting the oil firms from the depot would result in fuel shortages and price hikes.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez said the country needs to uphold its fuel supply security given the increased threat of conflict in the Middle East.

Atienza said he feels he is in a spot because he is caught between upholding a national concern and a local one.

He said the oil firms still have time to "show sincerity and a sense of urgency" in complying with their commitments.

"The firms have to convince us that we and they are working towards one goal, which is to ensure the security of Pandacan residents and introduce genuine development in the area," he said.

He said that whenever he passes by the depot, he does not even see workers rushing the construction of the buffer zone or the dismantling of fuel storage tanks near the community.

"The ball is now in the hands of the oil firms; they can either leave or they can stay on to fulfill their obligations," he said.

The mayor said he will meet his allies in the City Council to review the compliance of the oil firms and decide what course to take.

METROBRIEFS

Abducted in QC

BUSINESSMAN Raul Arroyo and his daughter were abducted, hogtied and left on the road side by three armed robbers Sunday night. Arroyo, 53, of Barangay Sta. Cruz, Quezon City, went to the Central Police District on Monday to file a complaint. Arroyo told police that as he and his daughter Janice were driving through Estaban Abada Street in Quezon City at around 9:30 p.m., a white Nissan Sentra came up and blocked their path. Three men got down and pointed their guns at Arroyo, who was behind the wheel of his Suzuki Vitara (UTJ-870). The suspects then tied up Arroyo and his daughter and forced them in the backseat. The victims were later dumped in Marikina City, while their vehicle was abandoned a few meters away, police said. The suspects fled on board the Nissan. Arroyo said the robbers took their Nokia 6210 and 5210 cell phones worth P22,000, wallet with P2,000 in cash and two rings.

Alcuin Papa

Nabbed in Navotas

POLICE on Sunday caught four men in the act of robbing a pawnshop in Navotas. Suspects Ben Dawang, 36, Julius Kimay, 29, James Pomdat, 28, and Diana Perez, 28, all residents of Barangay Siapac were drilling a hole through the wall of the Milan Pawnshop on A. Santiago Street a few minutes after midnight Sunday, when they triggered the alarm system; said Supt. Billy Beltran, Navotas police chief. Police said the suspects rented the apartment beside the pawnshop, destroyed the wall and were attempting to enter the pawnshop when the alarm sounded, alerting policemen in a nearby station. Police surprised the suspects just as they were about to escape with assorted jewelry.

Tina Santos

Stabbed in Novaliches

WARLITO Gaudiel, a former barangay watchman, was stabbed dead early Monday morning in Quezon City by two men who were making trouble in a videoke bar, police said. Police managed to arrest one of the two suspects in the stabbing, a man identified only as Cheng and a resident of Constantine Street, Kingspoint Subdivision, Barangay Bagbag, Novaliches, Quezon City. SPO4 Marcelino Castillo said Gaudiel, 42, also of Kingspoint Subdivision, was having a drink in the Corstrel Videoke Bar on King Alexander Street, Kingspoint Subdivision at around 1:30 a.m., when the two suspects began making trouble in the bar. Castillo said the victim then told the suspects to stop making trouble. This angered the suspects, one of whom drew a dagger and stabbed the victim twice in the chest. Gaudiel died at the Quezon City General Hospital, Castillo said.

Alcuin Papa

Kakampi ng Naaapi! Magbabalik na!

Inaccurate reporting

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

FORMER Sen. Rene Saguisag once said that the only report that was accurate in a newspaper is the date it is published. And even the date, he said, was sometimes inaccurate.

Of course, Saguisag said that in jest. But sometimes, glaring inaccurate reports in newspapers make readers wonder whether Saguisag was really joking.

Take, for example, the report that policemen in Sison, Pangasinan recovered P10 million from the wreckage of a car involved in a road accident and returned the amount intact to the relatives of the dead victims.

* * *

The report was published in a major daily (not the INQUIRER) and it formed the basis for my column item on Jan. 4 about the accident and the honest deed of the Sison town cops.

Yes, the story about the cops' honesty was accurate. But the amount supposedly returned was much less than the amount reported. The amount recovered and returned was only P100,000, not P10 million.

The correspondent who filed the story apparently upped the amount so her story would be given prominence in her newspaper.

* * *

I was very embarrassed when a friend of the dead victims told me the amount turned over to them was P100,000, not P10 million as I reported in this space.

"Mon, the victims couldn't have been carrying that much money because they were going to Baguio on a vacation. Why would they bring P10 million cash on a vacation?" said my friend.

Nagmukha akong tanga! I think I deserved that rebuke for relying on the news report and not checking with the Sison police station.

* * *

But I did check on the veracity of the report before I published the story in this space and sang hosannahs to the honest cops.

I called up Senior Supt. Arturo Cacdac, Pangasinan PNP chief, to check the report with him. He said he learned about the road mishap and his cops' honesty from the newspaper story.

Cacdac said he was clueless about the report, but that he would check with the Sison police. He said he would call me later for more details.

I assumed that since he didn't call me later, the amount returned was accurate.

* * *

Cacdac should learn a lesson from the story.

From now on, he should be on top of every situation in his area of responsibility.

Every police incident in your province, big or small, is your responsibility. You should not leave everything to your subordinates, Superintendent.

* * *

If I were the editor of that newspaper I would fire the correspondent.

Minor inaccuracies committed by reporters, like misspelling the names of people involved in crime or other incidents, can be overlooked. But that mistake showed not only sloppiness in gathering facts by the correspondent. It also showed her dishonesty.

She wanted her story to be given much prominence so she reported that an astronomical amount was found by the cops among the wreckage and returned to the relatives of the victims. If that were not the case, how come she didn't file a follow-up report to correct the inaccuracy of her first report?

As for me, from now on I'll only make stories filed by INQUIRER reporters as the bases for my column items.

* * *

Before President Macapagal-Arroyo bows out in June 2004, she will have carried out the first phase of one of her most significant economic development projects: the rehabilitation of the commuter line from Caloocan to Alabang, Muntinlupa. It is called the South Manila Commuter Rail Project.

The project is aimed at decongesting traffic in Metro Manila because many commuters will take the trains instead of buses or jeepneys in the Caloocan-Alabang route, according to PNR general manager Jose Ma. I. Sarasola II.

Included in the project is the acquisition of brand-new engines and air-conditioned coaches. The railroad tracks and bridges along the route will be repaired. Train stations will be refurbished.

* * *

The most difficult part of the project, clearing both sides of the railways along the Caloocan-Alabang route of squatter shanties, will be undertaken by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

The council is headed by Secretary Michael Defensor. But it seems, according to my sources, Defensor is hesitant to carry out the relocation of squatters along the railways.

He probably doesn't want to offend the squatter-voters because he plans to run for the Senate.

* * *

If squatter shanties are removed from both sides of the railroad tracks, the project will move fast, according to my sources.

Defensor should not worry about offending the squatters because the National Housing Authority (NHA) has already prepared a plan for their relocation. Funds for their relocation are already available.

The project, to be funded by the Korean Export-Import Bank, will start in March. The first step of the project is removal of the squatters. From there, the other steps will be easy.

Makati's 'jolli-jeeps' take a beating from city measure

By Michelle V. Remo

JOLLI-JEEPS, like these on Palanca Street in Makati, have turned into blue-collar havens, catering to the frugal appetite of minimum wage-earners toiling in the concrete jungle.

ROMY HOMILLADA

CHEAP and delicious food.

Nothing can beat the combination of good food and affordable prices that mobile canteens offer in Makati.

This is why company driver Christopher Tenoria prefers eating lunch in mobile canteens or "jolli-jeeps," as these came to be known in the streets.

Tenoria is just one of the many Makati office workers who flock to the mobile canteens during lunch breaks, making the jolli-jeeps ubiquitous fixtures in the Central Business District.

Costing as low as P38 to as much as P55, a meal in a mobile canteen comes with rice, a main dish and soft drink.

Mobile canteens have become a blue collar haven—just ask the many patrons who are mostly minimum wage earners trying to survive a dismal economy.

As early as the 1980s, mobile canteens have existed in Makati's main business areas. Their number ballooned to about 300, when many buildings were being constructed, according to Carmelito Anzures of Makati City Hall's information and community relations department.

Brisk business

Mang Francis, a mobile canteen operator, said he put up his mobile canteen in 1993 after he bought a jeepney with money he saved while working in Saudi Arabia. He parked his mobile canteen on Carlos Palanca Street on Legaspi Village and enjoyed brisk business at lunch time, earning a minimum of P800 to P1,000 a day.

But after Mang Francis replaced his jeepney with a stall, to comply with a city ordinance, the former overseas worker said that he now barely earns enough to support his three children.

Marlyn Asilo, who operates her mobile canteen on Valero Street in Salcedo Village, also suffered losses.

She said she used to earn between P1,000 to P1,500 a day, until the city ordinance was implemented.

With only their parking fee as overhead and no permits from the city government, mobile canteens like those owned by Mang Francis and Asilo flourished.

Anzures said that the city government allowed the operation of mobile canteens without the necessary permits and taxes paid because City Hall "believed mobile canteen operators were just small businessmen who were trying to make a living."

Eyesores

But when City Hall received complaints about the "bad sanitation" and the canteens being an "eye sore," the city government decided to regulate mobile canteen operations.

City Ordinance No. 2002-007 provides that a third party who would win the bid to construct the stalls to replace the jeepneys would supervise the operations. There is a provision in the ordinance that requires operators to maintain the cleanliness of the sidewalks where their canteens stand.

The new stalls should have a built-in sink, where kitchenware could be washed. Running water would be provided to the stalls through a water tank placed atop each stall.

Those manning the stalls are required to wear a uniform of white T-shirt and apron. Food should be served in styropor containers with disposable utensils, instead of regular flatware and plastic plates.

Stall owners are also required to practice waste segregation and dispose of their garbage in specified areas.

Uniform stalls were designed and constructed to replace the jeepneys by winning bidder Coffeenomenon Café Corp. in August 2002. The company now ensures that the canteens follow City Hall regulations.

Asilo welcomes the changes.

"More customers now come after noticing that our stores are supervised and more sanitary," she said.

But the improvements come with a price.

Now run like any other business, mobile canteens are required to get business permits and pay taxes to the city government.

P500 a day

Asilo said the operators have to shell out P500 daily—P150 for the parking fee and P350 for rent of the stall from Coffeenomenon.

She said that the fees are eroding her earnings so that she now has to extend operations to earn the extra P500 she needs for daily expenses.

Asilo said she did not raise her prices, but added more variety to her main dishes to attract more customers.

Even if she's feeling the crunch, Asilo would follow the rules, she said.

"If you want to earn a living, you should keep up with the demands," she said in Filipino.

Another operator, who asked not to be named, said that some operators find the P500 daily fees exorbitant, especially during weekends when there are only a few customers.

Under the ordinance, some of the operators were also disqualified.

One provision states that only mobile canteen operators who are residents of Makati are allowed to continue their businesses.

This reduced the number of mobile canteen operators from 175 to 123, according to Anzures.

But the laws should be observed, he said, adding that mobile canteen operators have already benefited from 15 years of operations without any responsibility to the government.

Cabanban no longer a suspect in Campos killing, police say

By Christian Esguerra

POLICE investigators on Tuesday said Chief Supt. John Campos' close friend, Antonio Cabanban, is no longer the prime suspect in the ex-narcotics officer's cold-blooded killing in Parañaque City last month.

Supt. Daniel Macatlang, Southern Police District legal service chief, said Cabanban was cleared after probers examined the supplemental statement Cabanban issued to police last Jan. 7.

In the three-page sworn statement, Cabanban said Campos had most feared Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya and had been receiving rude phone calls and messages from Mary "Rosebud" Ong, the victim's ex-lover.

Cabanban, 41, also said in the statement that Campos had no rift with Sen. Panfilo Lacson. He said the senator could not have ordered the killing of his former subordinate.

"(Cabanban is) believable... He's cleared unless there's a very credible witness who would positively identify him as the brains behind the killing," Macatlang said.

But Cabanban's most convincing argument against the accusations against him was the fact that he, too, was nearly killed by the bonnet-wearing assassin, the SPD official said.

Cabanban was seated to the left of Campos while they were about to eat at a 24-hour roadside restaurant when a gunman shot the police officer to death from across Doña Soledad Avenue last Dec. 5.

Sought for comment Monday night, Cabanban said the bloodstained olive knitted shirt he was wearing during the ambush should prove that he had barely escaped death. The INQUIRER was shown the unwashed shirt which still contained what Cabanban said was bits of Campos' brains.

"Even if you had promised to pay me millions, I would not have risked sitting right beside John during the ambush," he told the INQUIRER.

In clearing Cabanban, Macatlang said the investigation would be anything but back to square one.

He said police intelligence men are now tracing the owners of the phone numbers that appeared in the mobile units of Campos and Cabanban three days before the ambush.

Lawyer: Road rage killer no psychopath

THE LAWYER of Navy Captain Eladio C. Tangan has protested his client's depiction as a "murderer" and a "cold blooded psychopath."

In a letter, lawyer Carnell Valdez maintained that his client did not kill 29-year-old optometrist Generoso Miranda without provocation.

Valdez cited the regional trial court's decision that Miranda was shot after he and his uncle tried to wrest Tangan's gun.

"It was while the accused and the two Mirandas were grappling for the possession of the gun that it went off hitting Miranda in the stomach," Valdez cited the decision as saying.

The lawyer added that as per the lower court's findings, it was Miranda who provoked Tangan when the victim got down from his car first and approached Tangan during a traffic altercation.

Valdez also cited the decision as saying that Miranda shouted expletives at Tangan and slapped him, and that Miranda's uncle Manuel even punched the Navy Captain.

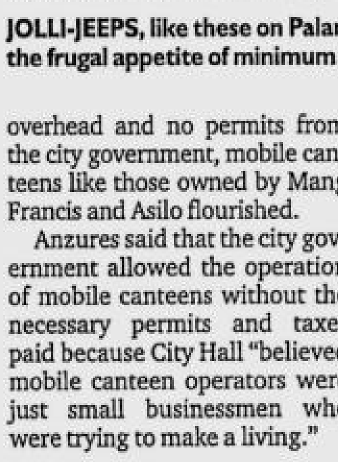
Thus, the lower court ruled that Tangan was guilty of homicide with incomplete self-defense.

The Court of Appeals upheld these findings, said the lawyer, but lamented that the Supreme Court "overturned the findings" and increased Tangan's penalty.

Leila Salaverria

Myracel fears losing her sight

By Christian Esguerra



MYRACEL Manuel, 24

HERS is a life of tragedies and misfortunes.

Myracel Manuel's mother died of leukemia in 1996, while her father later lost his left leg due to diabetes. Myracel has already lost her left eye due to complications brought about by a failed kidney.

She might soon go totally blind.

Myracel, a 24-year-old computer programmer, is appealing to kind-hearted souls to help her raise the money she needs to sustain her daily and lengthy medication.

She needs at least P5,000 weekly for her dialysis, on top of a whopping P350,000 for a kidney transplant. She is currently trying to raise about P80,000 for a pre-transplant procedure involving her younger sister.

"I have no one to turn to," she said. "I'm the sole breadwinner. My salary could barely keep my family afloat. I don't know where to get all the money for my medication."

Her father has long been sidelined by the amputated leg. Her 22-year-old sister is a single mom while their youngest, 9, is not even assured of continued schooling.

Should she lose her eyesight, Myracel fears she might lose her job as well.

Zero-waste project in world family meet

By Joey C. Papa and Ana Ver-Papa
Contributors

EVERY THREE years since 1994, Christian families from all over the world meet upon the invitation of the Pope to "pray, dialogue, learn, share and deepen their understanding and appreciation of how the Christian family fulfills its role as a domestic Church."

This year, the fourth meeting is the first to be held in Asia, specifically in Manila, in recognition of the Philippines as the only Catholic country on this continent. Close to 10,000 delegates from here and abroad were expected to attend the plenary sessions at the Philippine International Convention Center on Jan. 22 until Jan. 24. The overnight vigil on Jan. 25 and 26 will be open to the public at the Rizal Park.

"The Christian Family: Good News for the Third Millennium" is the theme of the meeting. For the Pope, the Third Millennium is also the "Asian Millennium," the time for the proclamation of the Name and Gospel of Jesus Christ among and by Asian families.

Part of the good news in the celebration is the call of Jaime Cardinal Sin "to make the Fourth World Meeting of Families . . . a zero-waste celebration of life."

The EcoWaste Coalition, composed of various environment groups in the country, has foreseen the serious waste problem that the meeting would pose. It has proposed to work with the organizers of the meeting to reduce waste and make the most of recycling by reusing the discards that would be generated during the meeting.

In heeding the proposal of the EcoWaste Coalition, Cardinal Sin has realized that greening the meeting would be "in keeping with the Church mission of caring for the Earth and also in adherence to the provisions of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of the Philippines," or Republic Act No. 9003.

The Cardinal said that the project, therefore, "is a concrete response to the prevailing waste problems in Metro Manila and in our global society."

He has enjoined all the participants to work together for a "wasteless" meeting by observing the following:

- Minimize the creation of waste by using as few resources as possible in the various meeting events;
- Avoid using plastic and disposable items;
- Separate waste and dispose of it at the designated recovery stations;
- Put waste in paper containers to facilitate recycling and to make simpler the work of cleaners and collectors; place biodegradable and non-biodegradable wastes in their respective bins.

With these measures, the organizers expect to reduce the waste at the meeting and recover most of the resources through waste separation at source and recycling.

The Cardinal said that "by ensuring that nothing is wasted (John 6:12), we make it known that the Christian Family actively participates in healing and restoring the beauty of our ravaged land, particularly through the ecological management of our discards."

A zero-waste world meeting of families would also serve to address the problem Pope John Paul II has mentioned.

"Modern society will find no solution to the ecological crisis unless it takes a serious look at its lifestyles," the Pope said. "In many parts of the world, society is given to instant gratification and consumerism while remaining indifferent to the damage that these cause. The seriousness of the ecological crisis lays bare the depths of man's moral crisis."

People, Events & Products

Email: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph

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SM City celebrates Dinagyang with food, parades, concert

SM CITY Iloilo celebrates the Dinagyang Festival with festive exhibits, food festivals, and a concert this January.

The Dinagyang, which honors the Santo Nino, began in 1967 and combines traditional religious devotion with fun and folklore. During the festivities, soot-covered tribal warriors in their colorful regalia go about merrymaking in a Mardi Gras-like parade, the Kasadyahan. For this year's Dinagyang, the Kahilwayan Tribe performed at SM City Iloilo.

Mall goers can get a glimpse of festivals past in the Dinagyang Through the Years exhibit ongoing until Jan. 26 at the 2nd level of the mall. The exhibit features spectacular photos of costumed tribesmen, showing the public an evolution of the costumes of various tribes through the years.

Likewise, the festival's religious fervor is highlighted in the Santo Nino exhibit, which features antique statues of the Holy Child. Prominent families of Iloilo have loaned their beautiful statues to the exhibit, which is ongoing at the 2nd level of SM City Iloilo until Jan. 26. Among the images exhibited is the Santo Nino de Arevalo, which along with those in Cebu and Binondo is considered one of the three oldest religious images in the country.

The mall also plays host to the prestigious Ms. Dinagyang 2003 beauty pageant, showcasing its swimwear, talent, and evening gown competitions, as well as its coronation night. Other pageants, like the Hiyas Sang Iloilo and Iloilo Queen 2003 Talent Competition, and the Little Miss Zest-o Dinagyang 2003, was also recently held Jan. 20 and 21, respectively.

Truly a feast for the senses, the festivities will include a Dinagyang 2003 Foodfest, wherein mall tenants will showcase special Ilonggo dishes and fiesta fare. The three-day foodfest will be held from Jan. 24 to 26 starting at 7 p.m.

There's more feasting ahead with Knorr's Dinagyang Cooking Demo and Barangay Cookfest. This demo-cum-contest will teach mallgoers how to prepare Ilonggo specialties and fiesta fare. Barangays from all over Iloilo, on the other hand, join the Barangay cooking competition and win exciting prizes. Both events are on Jan. 24.

Capping the festivities are the bands—both homegrown and from Manila—that will perform at the mall's street party series. These include Brownbeat All Stars, SOM, Rhythm Combination, 8th Avenue Band with the Final Impact Dancers on Jan. 24, and Moonstar 88, MP3 Band, Technocrats and Magazine 60 Dancers on Jan. 25. Parokya ni Edgar, Sould Out Band, and Tribal Quest Dancers will be taking center stage on Jan. 26.

RAMIL Gorrieza captures the colorful and spirited merrymaking of the Tribu Congo warriors in the Dinagyang Through the Years exhibit.

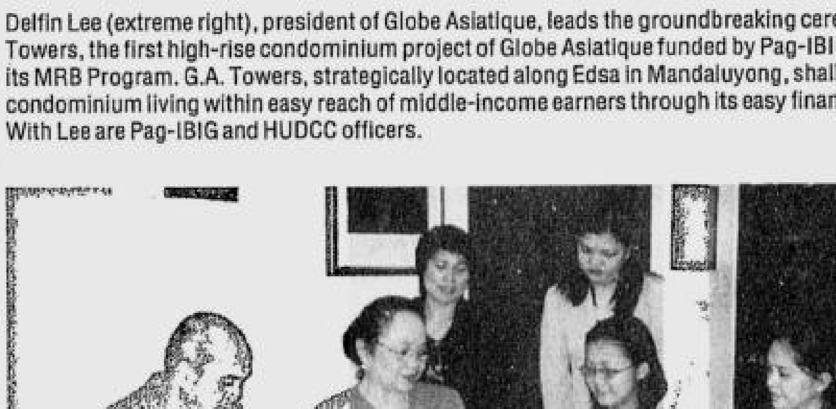
THIS photo of a Sigabong tribe warrior by Ramil Gorrieza is included in the Dinagyang Through the Years exhibit.

SEN. LEGARDA GRACES EXPO

Senator Loren Legarda-Leviste (center) graces this year's Culinary, Kitchen and Food Expo held last Dec. 5 to 10 at SM Megamall. With her are culinary genius Mrs Sylvia Reynoso-Gala (left) and Campbell Soup Philippines country manager Ramon Felix (right).

GA TOWERS GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

Delfin Lee (extreme right), president of Globe Asiatique, leads the groundbreaking ceremony of G.A. Towers, the first high-rise condominium project of Globe Asiatique funded by Pag-IBIG Fund under its MRB Program. G.A. Towers, strategically located along Edsa in Mandaluyong, shall make condominium living within easy reach of middle-income earners through its easy financing scheme. With Lee are Pag-IBIG and HUDCC officers.



JRS TO SERVICE PYEN MEET

JRS Express signed an agreement with Ecological Society of the Philippines (ESP) for the handling and delivery of materials needed for the Philippine Youth Employment Network (Pyen) Summit Conference in Cebu City in April this year. Signing agreement held at the main office of JRS Express in Pasig City (from left) are: Carlito D. Navarro; Milady J. Muñoz of JRS; Katherine B. Kamping, chair of Pyen; and Princess Hafsha D. Lucman, Pyen logistics committee head. Standing, from left, are Mildred B. Bartolay and Marie A. Deleña of ESP.

POPE'S REPRESENTATIVE VISITS ISLAND COVE

Alfonso Cardinal Lopez Trujillo (center), Pontifical Council of the Family president and Pope John Paul II's delegate to the 4th World Meeting of Families in Manila, with Papal Nuncio Antonio Franco (4th from left), visited Island Cove Resort in Kawit, Cavite to speak to the delegates of Neo-Cathecumenal Communities' Convivencia of Asia in Manila held at Island Cove Jan. 17 to 24.

Welcoming Cardinal Trujillo and the Papal Nuncio are Island Cove employees (from left) housekeeping department manager Gerry Gadon, purchasing officer Norman Avancena, general manager Norlinda Agustin, director of sales and marketing Liza Morales, marketing communications manager Rey Arcedera, and corporate sales associate Carmen Rivera.

Bits Clips

Ateneo stages 'Fiddler'

WATCH the 71 production of the Ateneo Children's Theater, the timeless classic "Fiddler on the Roof"—a play about love, family, and tradition. Gala performances are on Jan. 31, Feb. 1, 7, and 8 at 6 p.m. at the Fr. Henry Lee Irwin Theatre, Ateneo de Manila. Tickets will be sold at P100 and P150. For more inquiries, call the office of the assistant headmaster for student affairs at 426-6001 local 7109/7110.

Chiang Kai-Shek golf tourney

THE CHIANG Kai-Shek College Alumni Association announces the holding of the 2003 Alumni Cup Golf Tournament at the Sta. Elena Golf and Country Club in Cabuyao, Laguna on Monday, Feb. 3. Registration starts at 6 a.m. Tee time is 7:30. All interested alumni are urged to register in advance because of limited playing slots, by calling Kathy at the alumni secretariat at 253-0808 and 253-0909. The tourney features hole-in-one prizes in all par 3s: 1 Toyota Altis 1.6 A/T and 1 Revo GSX 2.0 M/T donated by Toyota Motors Philippines courtesy of George Ty, alumnus, P50,000 cash from Davies Paints, and P50,000 worth of merchandise from Healthy Options. Two round-trip business class tickets for Shanghai will be the major raffle prize, donated by Philippine Air Lines courtesy of Lucio Tan, alumnus.

Doctor speaks on Chinese porcelain

JOY PLES Evangelista MD, art connoisseur and proprietor of Gallerie Denise, talks about her personal collection and guides lovers of paintings by Filipino artists and Chinese porcelain during its Grand Fiesta and Chinese New Year Sale until Feb. 2 at the gallery at the ground floor of the Kingswood Arcade, Kingswood Condominium Complex in Vito Cruz Extension corner Pasong Tamo, Makati City. Paintings from her private collection will be on sale at 20-percent off. Among the artists are Jose Joya, Juvenal Sanso, Manuel Baldemor, Carlo Magno, Jun Martinez, Pat Reyes, Lydia Velasco, Fatima and Hermes Alegre. Art lovers will also enjoy the select handmade rugs from Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. Gallery hours are from 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 2 to 7:30 p.m. on Sundays. For details, call 895-1152.

2 seminars from CFS

CFS CONTINENTAL Technology is offering two seminars this month: "Prospecting and Creative Approach in Marketing" (Jan. 31, 8:30 a .m. to 12 noon) teaches participants how to gather names of prospects and to start the conversation in fulfillment of growth targets, "Counter Selling That Works" (Jan. 31, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.) shares tips on how to best conduct the selling process through a three-part module before, during and after the sales. Call 8697960, 8232358 or 8234825.

St. Scholastica's College homecoming

THE HIGH School Class of 1978 invites all alumnae of St. Scholastica's College Manila to the Annual Homecoming festivities on Sunday, Feb. 9. Registration is at 2 p.m. at the school grounds. Alumnae of high school and college classes of 1973, 1968, 1963, 1958, 1953, 1948, 1938, 1933 and 1928 are requested to preregister now with the Alumnae Office at 524-1559 or 524-7686. High School and college Jubilarians who graduated in 1978 can call this year's chair Sandie Romulo-Squillantini at 818-4202, (0917)895-8429 or e-mail rrrsquil@itextron.com.

PDI debating championship begins February

THE PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer is hosting the 2nd Inquirer Intercollegiate Debating Championship (IIDC) with the UP Diliman Debate Society starting Feb. 7 to 11 at the University of the Philippines, Diliman. With over 60 universities, colleges and high schools nationwide participating, this year's tournament promises to be one of the most exciting and challenging events to date.

As part of the Inquirer's youth readership campaign, the IIDC aims to heighten awareness on local and international issues and promote critical thinking and intelligent dialogue among the youth. Through this, the Inquirer hopes to inspire students to explore their potentials and become the best they can be. Last year, the winning team from Ateneo de Manila was sent to Thailand to represent the Philippines in the 9th All Asian Debating Championship.

The tournament is in Asian Parliamentary format. Registration is currently ongoing, and more teams are encouraged to represent their schools. Colleges and universities are encouraged to join the debating tournament, while high school students are invited to participate in the public speaking competition. The IIDC champion will get the chance to participate in the 10th All Asian Debating Championships to be held in Malaysia in May.

The 2nd Inquirer Intercollegiate Debating Championship is made possible by INQ7.net, 2BU!, Studio 23, Visine, The National Youth Commission, Bookmark, Arellano Law Foundation, Equitable-PCIBank, Nestle, Emerald Headway Distributors, and 3M. For more inquiries, call 0917-81434934, or e-mail iidc@lycos.com.

BATANGAS KITCHEN NOW OPEN

Batangas Kitchen, a new concept in Filipino cuisine, inks a contract with Farmers Plaza for its newly opened Celebrity Floor at the 3rd level. Shown is Ernie Cezar (standing) of Farmer's Plaza with (seated, from left) Alfie Ramirez, singer-actress Rina Reyes, Bella T. Ramirez and Cerafin Ramirez.

JWT AND UNILEVER CELEBRATE PARTNERSHIP

To commemorate 100 years of partnership between J. Walter Thompson and Unilever, Campaigns magazine, the UK advertising industry's magazine has come out with a special supplement celebrating the long-running partnership. Mitos Borromeo, JWT Manila's managing director, is shown here turning over to Howard Belton, Unilever Philippines' chair, a copy of that supplement. Looking on is Rachel Lauchangco, JWT's vice president and C.S. director for the Unilever account group.

For sreening times, call 729-7777.
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

ALL DIGITAL SOUND CINEMAS

G1 GLORIETTA 1

- THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
- RING (ORIG. JAPANESE VERSION)
- THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
- 4 THE HOT CHICK

G4 GLORIETTA 4

- 1 ONE HOUR PHOTO
- THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
- 8 MILE 11:40, 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30
- 4 TRY SEVENTEEN
- ANALYZE THAT
- 6 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
- 7 THE HOT CHICK

GB1 GREENBELT 1

- ALL OVER THE GUY (EXCLUSIVE) 11:55, 1:50, 3:45, 5:40, 7:35, 9:30
- RING (ORIG. JAPANESE VERSION) 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30

Onstage
OGIE ALCASID: OA SA PUSO
Feb. 7, 8, 13, 14 & 15

GB3 GREENBELT 3

- 8 MILE 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:25, 11:30
- THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 1:00, 4:30, 8:00, 11:30
- ANALYZE THAT 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30
- THE RING (HOLLYWOOD) 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30
- TRY SEVENTEEN 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER

- THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
- THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
- ANALYZE THAT
- 4 ONE HOUR PHOTO
- 5 THE HOT CHICK

Reserve your seats by texting "SURESEATS G4 (or any Ayala Cinemas) and send to 2333
Or log on to www.sureseats.com. [illegible] Guaranteed Seats Cinema

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MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	8 MILE
2 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	ONE HOUR PHOTO
4 GOLD (DTS ES)	ANALYZE THAT
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	LORD OF THE RING
6 GOLD (SDDS)	8 MILE
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	HOT CHICK
8	HALF PAST DEAD
9	TRY SEVENTEEN
10	THE RING

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3 (DTS)	RESERVE
4	KERIDA
5	RESERVE
6 (DTS)	HALF PAST DEAD
Golden Pearl THX	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA ① ② ③
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
3	BANGKERO

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	8 MILE
2	HOT CHICK
3	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	LORD OF THE RING
5	BANGKERO

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	THE RING
3	HOT CHICK
4	8 MILE
5	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
6	ANALYZE THAT

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	HALF PAST DEAD

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to13

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	LASTIKMAN

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515

1	RESERVE
2	MATAMIS NA PUGAD
3	RESERVE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	
2	
3	
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	8 MILE
4	HOT CHICK
5	TRY SEVENTEEN
6	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
7 (DTS)	ONE HOUR PHOTO
8 (SDDS)	THE RING
9 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	8 MILE
3	HOT CHICK
4 (SDDS)	HALF PAST DEAD
5	THE RING
6 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
7 (DTS)	ONE HOUR PHOTO
8	LASTIKMAN
9	BANGKERO

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	THE RING
4 (DOLBY)	8 MILE
5	HOT CHICK

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	8 MILE
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
5 (SDDS)	THE RING

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	
Lords	MASIKIP MAINIT
Jennet	RESERVE

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	THE RING
2	LORD OF THE RING
3	TRY SEVENTEEN
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2	8 MILE
3	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
4	ANALYZE THAT
5	THE RING

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	
2	

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	LORD OF THE RING

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	8 MILE
2	THE RING
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HOT CHICK
4 (SDDS)	LOD OF THE RINGS 2
5 (DTS)	TRY SEVENTEEN
6	ONE HOUR PHOTO
7	ANAYLYZE THAT

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 , 534.2198

1	BANGKERO
2	8 MILE
3 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	THE RING
2 (DTS)	8 MILE
3 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
4	HOT CHICK

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	THE RING
2 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	8 MILE
4	HOT CHICK

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	SWIM FAN
3 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
4	RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	BANGKERO
2	HEAVEN
3 (DOLBY)	HALF PAST DEAD
4 (THX)	

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	HALF PAST DEAD
2 (DTS)	BANGKERO
3	

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
2	RESERVE
3 (DTS)	THE RING
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2	HOT CHICK
3 (DTS)	BANGKERO
4	THE RING
5	8 MILE

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	BANGKERO
3	THE RING

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	THE RING
3	8 MILE

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	SWIMFAN
2	BIRTHDAY GIRL
3 (DTS)	DOUBLE SEDUCTION
4	LASTIKMAN

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	KERIDA
2	SHAOLIN SOCCER
3	BANGKERO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	KERIDA
2	SHAOLIN SOCCER
3	HALF PAST DEAD
4	LIKE MIKE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	LORD OF THE RING
2	HOT CHICK
3 (STEREO)	8 MILE
4	THE RING

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 322-3571

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DOLBY)	HOT CHICK
4	

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL MALL
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72

BE THE FIRST TO WITNESS
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS
NOW SHOWING

SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1	ONE HOUR PHOTO
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3	8 MILE
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
6	HOT CHICK
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
8	ANALYZE THAT

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	TRY SEVENTEEN
2	ONE HOUR PHOTO
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
5	8 MILE
6	HALF PAST DEAD
7	HOT CHICK
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
9	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
10	ANALYZE THAT

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	MANO PO
2	ANALYZE THAT
3	LASTIKMAN
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
5	8 MILE
6	TRY SEVENTEEN
7	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
8	HOT CHICK
9	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
11	ONE HOUR PHOTO
12	HALF PAST DEAD

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	HOT CHICK
2	RING (JAPANESE)
3	8 MILE
4	8 MILE
5	TRY SEVENTEEN
6	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
7	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
9	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
10	ANALYZE THAT
11	ONE HOUR PHOTO
12	HALF PAST DEAD

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	8 MILE
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3	8 MILE
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
5	RING (JAPANESE)
6	ANALYZE THAT
7	ONE HOUR PHOTO
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
9	HOT CHICK
10	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
11	HALF PAST DEAD
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9296452

1	HOT CHICK
2	RING (JAPANESE)
3	TRY SEVENTEEN
4	ANALYZE THAT
5	ONE HOUR PHOTO
6	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
7	8 MILE
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM SOUTHMALL
8096888

1	ANALYZE THAT
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	TRY SEVENTEEN
5	LASTIKMAN
6	HALF PAST DEAD
7	HOT CHICK
8	8 MILE
9	ONE HOUR PHOTO
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	CHARLOTTE GRAY
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	8 MILE
	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
5	BANGKERO
6	KERIDA
7	VAMPS
8	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	KERIDA
2	CLOSED
3	HALF PAST DEAD
	BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
5	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
6	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
7	CLOSED
8	UNFAITHFUL CONCUBINE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	8 MILE
3	SWIMFAN
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	KERIDA
6	HOT CHICK

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2	8 MILE
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	ANALYZE THAT

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	8 MILE
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	UNFAITHFUL CONCUBINE
3	LIKE MIKE
4	HALF PAST DEAD
5	8 MILE
6	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1	HOT CHICK
2	8 MILE
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2	KERIDA
3	SWIMFAN
4	HALF PAST DEAD

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-0976

1 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD VERSION)
11:30 FS/12:00 MF/3:40/7:20/
10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/2:10 END

2 8 MILE
11:00 FS/11:20 MF/1:40/4:00/6:20/
8:40/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:50 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 • Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate : P120.00 - After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls
call-a-movie: 536- 7812
NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279

THX	LORD OF THE RINGS II - 11:00 AM (MF); 2:30 PM; 6:00 PM; 9:30 PM (LMF)
2	HOT CHICK
3	ANALYZE THAT
4	ONE HOUR PHOTO
5	8 MILE
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II
7	HALF PAST DEAD
8	THE RING (US VERSION)
9	RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
10	TRY SEVENTEEN

MATINEE PRICE:P80 THX cinema / P65 tlevel cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING (US VERSION)
3	ONE HOUR PHOTO
4	RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
5	ANALYZE THAT
6	HOT CHICK
7	8 MILE

Metro East - Marcos hway
682- 8193 / 8280

1	THE RING (US VERSION)
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	ANALYZE THAT
4	HOT CHICK
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	8 MILE
7	ONE HOUR PHOTO
8	LASTIKMAN

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING (US VERSION)
3	HOT CHICK
4	8 MILE
5	ONE HOUR PHOTO
6	ANALYZE THAT
7	TRY SEVENTEEN
8	HALF PAST DEAD

Malabon Citisquare
288-0985 / 288-2575

1	8 MILE
2	LORD OF THE RING II
3	HOT CHICK
4	THE RING (US VERSION)

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp.
875- 1927
961- 5318 / 5270

1	8 MILE
2	'SWIMFAN
3	HOT CHICK
4	KERIDA
5	THE RING (US VERSION)
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II

Imus
471- 8168 / 875- 3838

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING (US VERSION)
3	HOT CHICK]
4	ANALYZE THAT
5	ONE HOUR PHOTO
6	TRY SEVENTEEN

Sta. Rosa Laguna

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING (US VERSION)
3	8 MILE
4	BANGKERO
5	HOT CHICK

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	THE RING (US VERSION)
2	8 MILE
3	HALF PAST DEAD
4	SWIMFAN
5	BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
6	LAPU-LAPU

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	THE RING (US VERSION)
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4	UNFAITHFUL CONCUVINE
5	DOUBLE SEDUCTION
6	KERIDA

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Valentine shows at The Venue

THE VENUE is the coolest and hottest nightlife destination in Davao City. With a huge seating capacity, billiard area and cool ambiance, The Venue is definitely a popular place for gimmicks, shows and special events.

Outside The Venue are a series of good restaurants and bars for people to hang-out.

This February, The Venue spells out fun and romance.

On Feb. 14, the wacky group of Pinky Marquez, Bimbo Cerrudo, Isay Alvarez and Dyords Javier, more popularly known as Angfourgettables, will topbill a night of rhythm and blues, rock 'n' roll and retro music. The quartet's performance will be spiced up with their unique brand of comedy.

On Feb. 15, the Generation X can watch the DMC all-star champions, composed of DJs Sir Scratch, MOD (Master of Disaster), Coki, Mcracor Ray and Rich.

"This group has been going returning to Davao by popular demand," say Buboy and Gene Bangayan, owners of The Venue.

The show will be backed up by sexy ledge dancers led by Suzette Lamsen.

For inquiries, call (082) 224-4150.

A piece of heaven . . .

From page A26

with a trio to serenade diners. Grazie to **Tess Labunog** for the warm reception. Loboc River is so unbelievably clean and clear.

Near Loboc is the historical Baclanon church, where the angelic-voiced Loboc Children's Choir sing. The choir was hired by Cesar to serenade Sunshine when he proposed to her by the beach there.

The next day, we took a Supercat to Cebu to attend the Sinulog festivities. At the port, I bumped into my good friends **Tin Tin Bersola** and **Julius Babao**, who is from Bohol. I surmised he gave his fiancee a tour of his hometown and introduced her to his clan. Such a sweet couple.

As Allan and I mingled with the crowd, I was in awe at how Cebuanos really take to heart their city's fiesta. Everyone had a Sinulog souvenir, be it a cap, shirt, whistle, face paint, tattoo or badge.

As Allan and I partied on to our heart's delight, I said to myself, "Show biz and life can either be one big fiesta or a grand masquerade ball not based on what you see, but on how you look at it."

May you all find your own personal reasons to celebrate life and love. Even sans fanfare, we all deserve our little piece of heaven.

Personal

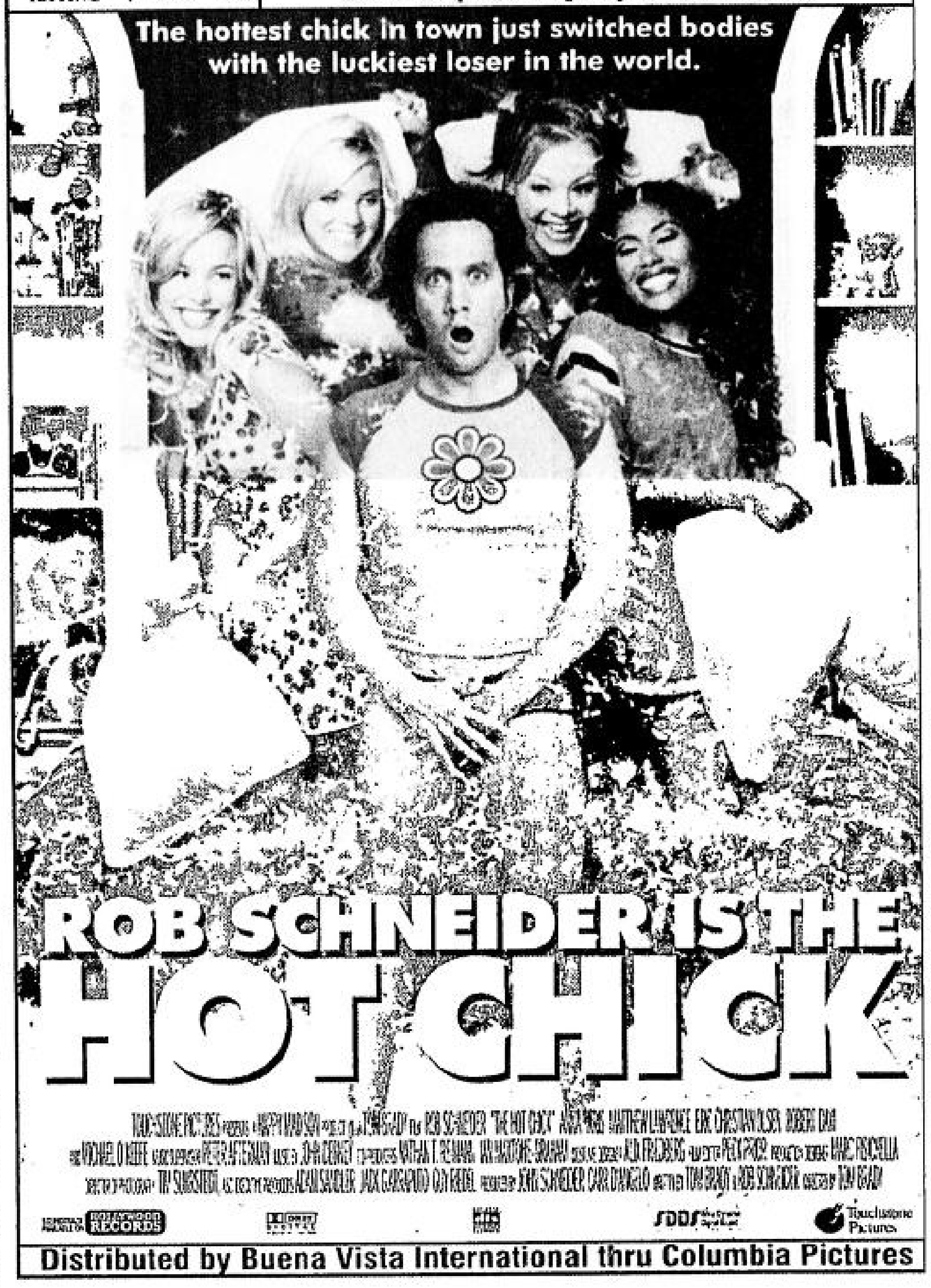
BIRTHDAY cheers, Allan S. Thanks for being living proof that the age of chivalry ain't dead yet.

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com or jaime alsan@yahoo.com

SUSMARYOSEP... THE ORIGINAL IS BACK!
SHOCK ALERT:
YOU PROBABLY WANT TO SEE THIS MOST-TALKED ABOUT HORROR FILM AGAIN AND AGAIN.
YOU ARE WARNED NOT TO ANTICIPATE THOSE SCARY SCENES THAT MAKE YOU SCREAM...
HOLD YOUR BREATH UNTIL THE SCENES ACTUALLY APPEAR ON THE SCREEN THEN LET GO...
AT SUMIGAW KA HANGGAT'T GUSTO MO !!!

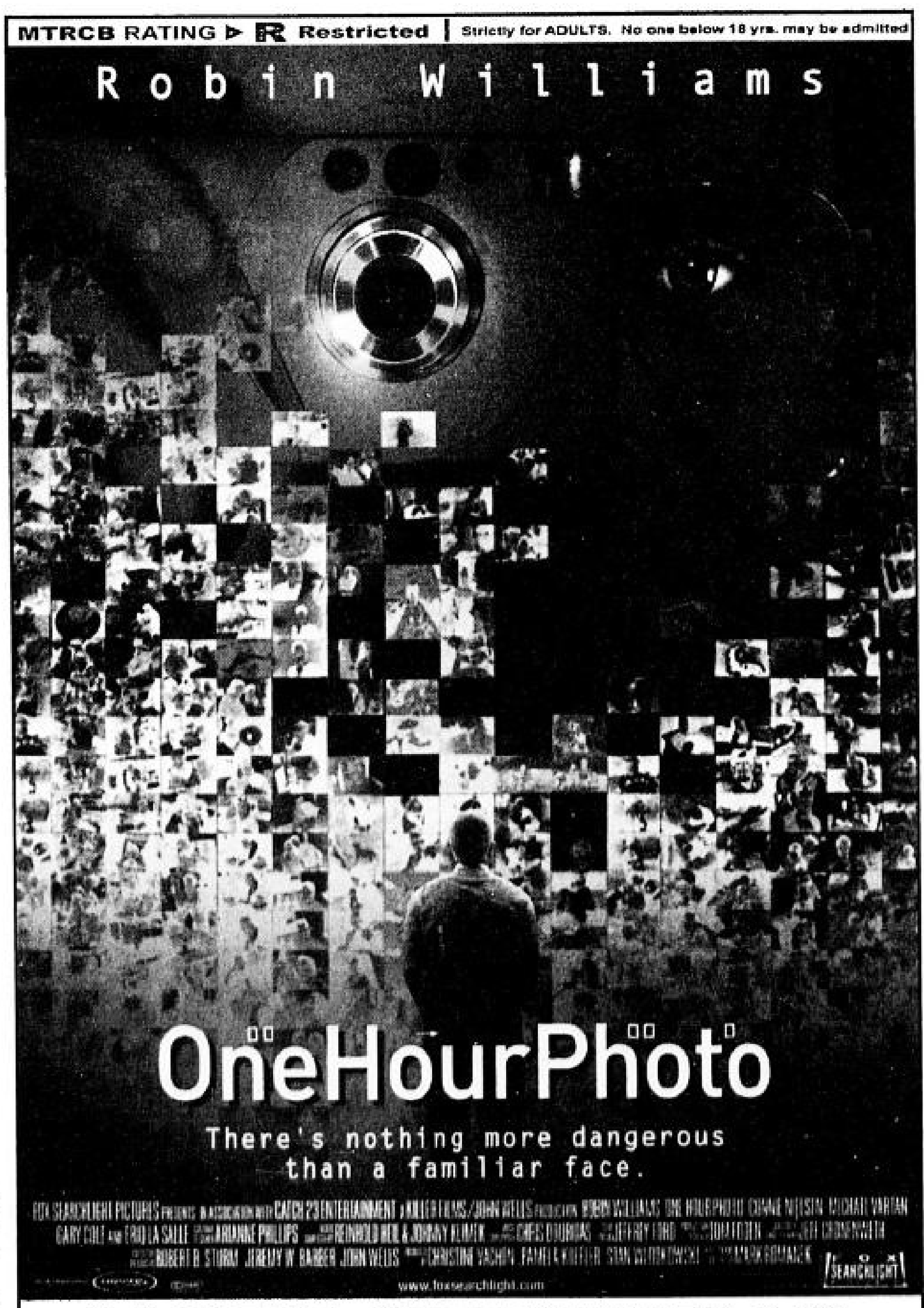
MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13
Experience Fear Worse Than Nightmare!!!
Ring
Circle of Evil
"There's a video. If you see it you have to show it to someone else. After seven days... you die!

HE'S HALF-PINOY, HILARIOUS, AND THE HOTTEST CHICK IN TOWN!
NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult



The hottest chick in town just switched bodies with the luckiest loser in the world.
ROB SCHNEIDER IS THE
HOT CHICK
Hollywood Records
Touchstone Pictures
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

MTRCB RATING ▸ R Restricted | Strictly for ADULTS. No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted



Robin Williams
OneHourPhoto
There's nothing more dangerous than a familiar face.
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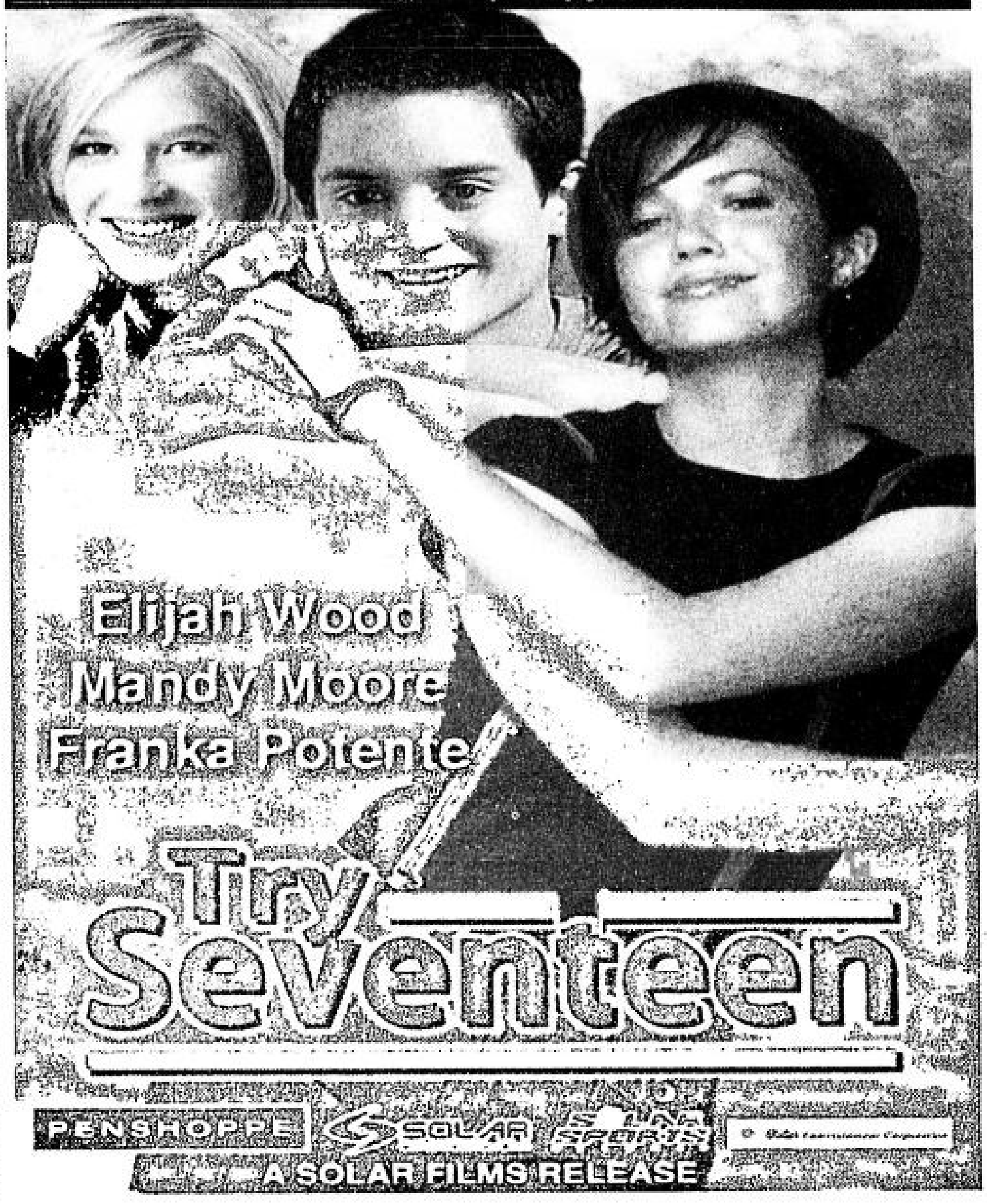
FREE TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND AT AYALA CINEMAS

WIN A FREE TRIP FOR TWO
TO NEW ZEALAND
AT AYALA CINEMAS
WHEN YOU WATCH
LORD OF THE RINGS
EXPLORE THE WORLD OF MIDDLE EARTH
A JOURNEY TO NEW ZEALAND
SEE POSTERS AND LEAFLETS FOR MORE DETAILS
Promo runs from Jan 11 to Feb 9, 2003
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0102, Series of 2003
Special Thanks to:
PIONEER MANILA BULLETIN BUFFALO WAVE 89.1 103.5 MAGIC 89.9

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
Parents are strongly warned against bringing children below 13. Some scenes can offend them



Elijah Wood
Mandy Moore
Franka Potente
Try Seventeen
PENSHOPPE
SOLAR SPORTS
A SOLAR FILMS RELEASE

"GUSTO KONG MAG-EKSPERIMENTO..."
raymond bagatsing carlo maceda
katya santos
Sukdulan
hanggang saan ka sasabay?
hanggang kailan ka bibigay?
VIVA
DIRECTED BY MAC C. ALEJANDRE
OPENS JANUARY 29

Ascent to stardom

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOW did the biggest stars and/or most admired actors today get to their current positions of preeminence? Not by rubbing an old lamp and ordering the genie in it to become a movie producers, that's for sure! They all worked their butts off before they ended up on easy street.

Take the most popular young-adult actor in Hollywood, **Leonardo DiCarpio**. At a tender age when most kids were still playing and goofing off, Leo was already making money as a child actor.

Following work in commercials and daytime television, he landed a regular role on the "Parenthood" series. Next, he joined the cast of the hit TV sitcom, "Growing Pains."

He landed his first big film role when director **Michael Caton-Jones** cast him in the coveted role of Tobias Wolff in the movie adaptation of Wolff's autobiographical drama, "This Boy's Life." Starring opposite **Robert De Niro** and **Ellen Barkin**, Leo was praised for his compelling performance as a boy who had to endure his stepfather's abuse.

His Oscar and Golden Globe nomination-winning turn in "What's Eating Gilbert Grape" came next followed by starring roles in three very diverse films, all released in 1995: **Sam Raimi**'s Western, "The Quick and the Dead," **Jim Carroll**'s drama on drug addiction, "The Basketball Diaries," and **Agnieszka Holland**'s film version of **Christopher Hampton**'s play, "Total Eclipse."

After that breakthrough year, Leo finally found his stellar stride, and again appeared in multiple feature—**Baz Luhrmann**'s "Romeo + Juliet," and the all-star (**Meryl Streep**, **Diane Keaton**, Robert De Niro) Marvin's Room.

Then came 1997—and "Titanic." **James Cameron**'s blockbuster shattered all box-office records and more won the Oscar and Golden Globe for Best Picture. The film's triumph made Leo the biggest young-adult star in the movie biz.

Unfortunately, his follow-up films—"The Beach," "Celebrity," "The Man in the Iron Mask"—were relative duds, and there came a troubled time when he took his fame and fortune for granted.

But he's since regained his focus on his career, and his two new films, "Gangs of New York" and "Catch Me If You Can," have been both popular and critical hits. Let's hope that Leonardo DiCarpio has learned his lessons well and is here to stay.

For his part, **Tom Hanks**, Leo's co-star in "Catch Me If You Can," began his show biz career as a comedian. After working for peanuts in comedy clubs, he finally got to star on the TV sitcom, "Bosom Buddies"—as a cross-dresser!

One would think that after flouncing around in a dress for several seasons in full view of the mainstream TV audience, Hanks would be trapped in silly roles forever. But he slowly and cleverly adjusted his big-screen image, from the out-and-out romantic-comedy-fantasy "Splash" to less giddy stuff and established his reputation as a versatile actor for all seasons.

In the few years, Hanks has effectively been crowned the King of Hollywood by virtue of his consistent output of popular or critical hits. He's also one of only two actors to ever win back-to-back Best Actor Oscars—first in 1994 for "Philadelphia," and the following year for "Forrest Gump."

More recently, Hanks has scored in major projects like "Saving Private Ryan," "The Green Mile," "Cast Away" and "Road to Perdition."

Even more impressively, he's expanded his influence in Hollywood by turning producer and director. In 1996, Hanks made his successful debut as writer and director with "That Thing You Do."

As producer, he's come up with the HBO miniseries, "From the Earth to the Moon," "Band of Brothers," and the smash hit romantic comedy, "My Big Fat Greek Wedding."

Feedback

FROM Ms. **Puring Sucgang**: "Our local TV sitcoms aren't sensible fare for young viewers. Once, the five-year-old son of our maid was watching a TV 'contrabida' fighting with the 'bida' and he shouted, '*Patayin mo! Patayin mo!*' I cautioned the boy by telling him that it was only on TV and not real.

"Multiply his emotion by the many homes where children are left with maids or left alone without parents to guide them, and we shouldn't wonder why we have so many juvenile delinquents.

"I also wonder why some channels import foreign telenovelas. We have enough local shows that are harmful. I wonder, too, what happened to the boycott by advertisers of some TV shows. They have set a good example by risking millions, and I hope they continue with it.

"We need people like you in media to help Filipinos regain their confidence in themselves. The media is very influential and can either be a bane or boon, especially when it comes to the values of our young people.

"We shouldn't patronize shows that lack good values and instead depict revenge and violence. I hope the broadcast media will not count the cost but focus more on the gains in changing their vision for being."

Meet the Superheroes at Marvel convention

THIS month, Superheroes will walk among us fragile humans. Everything is set for a spectacular event for all superhero fans.

See the uncanny X-Men popularized in Marvel comics. Have a glimpse of Daily Bugle photographer Peter Parker a.k.a. Spiderman.

Go inside scientist Dr. Banner's laboratory and witness Bruce Banner transform into the Incredible Hulk before your very eyes.

See the rest of the X-Men such as Cyclops, Wolverine, Professor X, Jean Grey, Rogue and Iceman. Catch sight of the dark avenger Daredevil and her martial arts master girlfriend Elektra, and more exciting heroes you adore.

This is your chance to meet the whole Marvel Universe in a spectacular array of booths, movie trailers, exhibits, games, merchandise and more.

Many activities are lined up in this once-in-a-lifetime event such as colorful and dazzling photo exhibits, video show of the latest Marvel movie trailers for the year such as "Daredevil" and the highly awaited, "The Hulk," just to name a few.

There will also be Marvel booths for trading cards, merchandise and whole lot more.

The fun-filled and exciting event for the whole family happens Jan. 31 at the NBC Tent at The Fort.

Tune in to Joey 92.3 for more details.

For Marvel Convention ticket inquiries, contact Marvel Headquarters (a.k.a Empire International) at 722-4311.

Vodka chooses distributor

THE ABSOLUT Company (TAC) recently appointed Maxxium Singapore Philippine Representative Office as the sole distributor of Absolut Vodka in the Philippines.

Absolut is the third largest international premium spirit in the world and is the number two brand of premium vodka worldwide.

Since its launch in 1979, Absolut has achieved significant worldwide sales growth and is available in 125 markets.

The Absolut family includes Absolut Vodka, Citron, Kurant and Mandarin.

CEREMONIAL TURN OVER. Eva Hedberg, area director of The Absolut Company Asia Pacific and Joey Mendoza, country director of Maxxium Singapore Philippine Representative Office.

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

ONE HOUR PHOTO R18 1:20,3:30,5:40, 7:50,10:00	8 MILE P13 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10	ANALYZE THAT P13 1:30,3:40,5:50, 8:00,10:10
HOT CHICK P13 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	THE RING P13 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 12:00,3:20,6:40,10:00

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

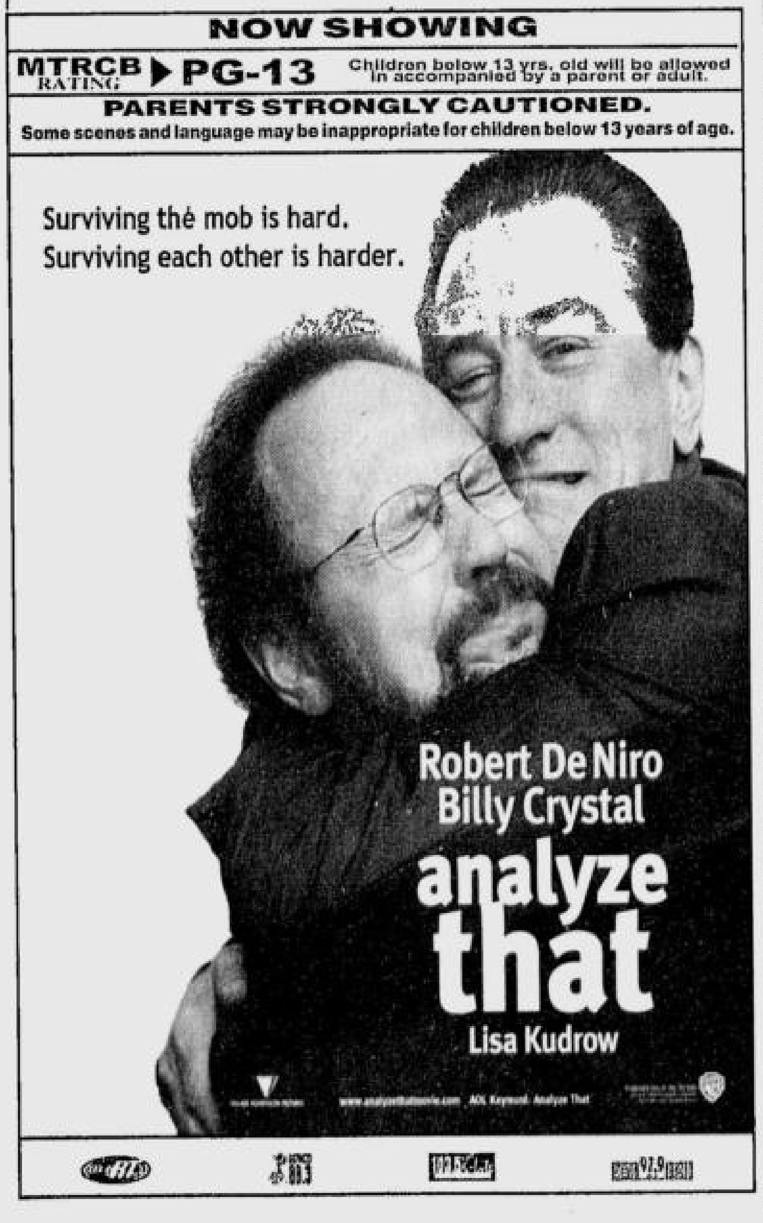
THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1	LORD OF THE RINGS 2 11:20 , 2:50 , 6:20 , 9:50 GP
CINEMA 2	THE RING 11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40 P13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM
JAN 24 & 25 2003 Have I Told You Today That I Love You? 8:00 PM
w/BITUIN ESCALANTE & PARA ISIDRO
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL 721-6726 OR 721-0635

OPENS JANUARY 29!
Ms. GLORIA ROMERO Ms. CELIA RODRIGUEZ AMY AUSTRIA
DANILO BARRIOS MARK GIL CHERRY PIE PICACHE
ALBERT MARTINEZ TONTON GUTIERREZ
and LORNA TOLENTINO
JIRO MANIO as
Introducing
GIRLIE SEVILLA
Walang katumbas ang wagas na pagmamahal
ALLISON VII GONZALES
JON ROMANO & SUSAN AFRICA
ISABELLA DE LEON
DINDIN LLARENA JOSEPH ROBLE
Theme song sung by:
GARY VALENCIANO
Directed by Maryo J. de los Reyes, DGPI
A Violett Films Production
RELEASED THROUGH GMA FILMS



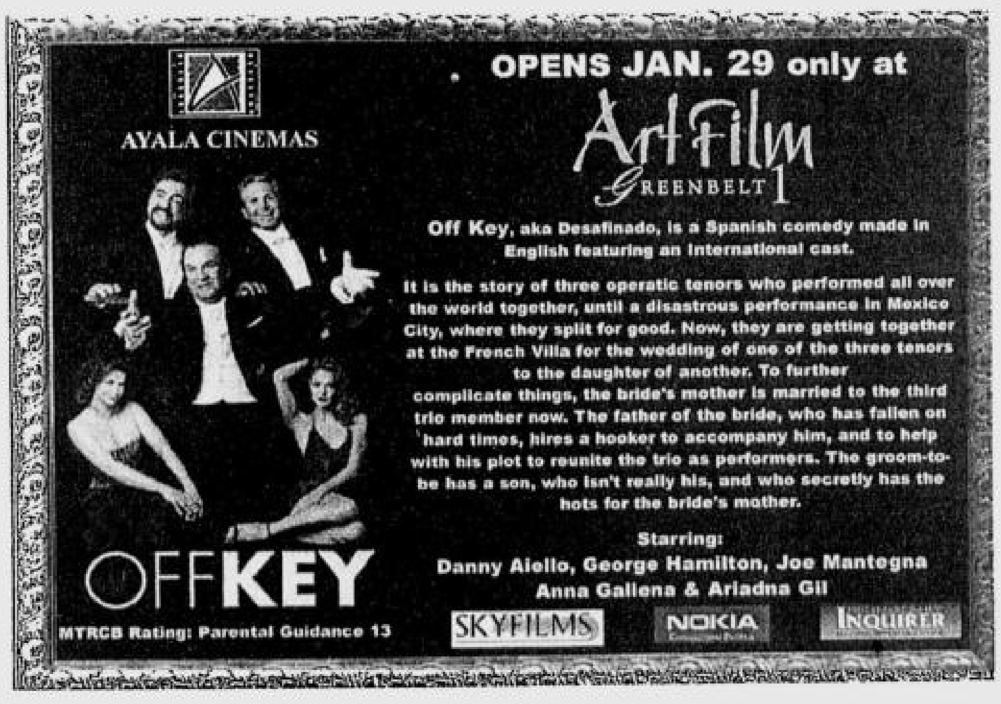
NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED.
Some scenes and language may be inappropriate for children below 13 years of age.
Surviving thé mob is hard.
Surviving each other is harder.
Robert De Niro
Billy Crystal
analyze that
Lisa Kudrow

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

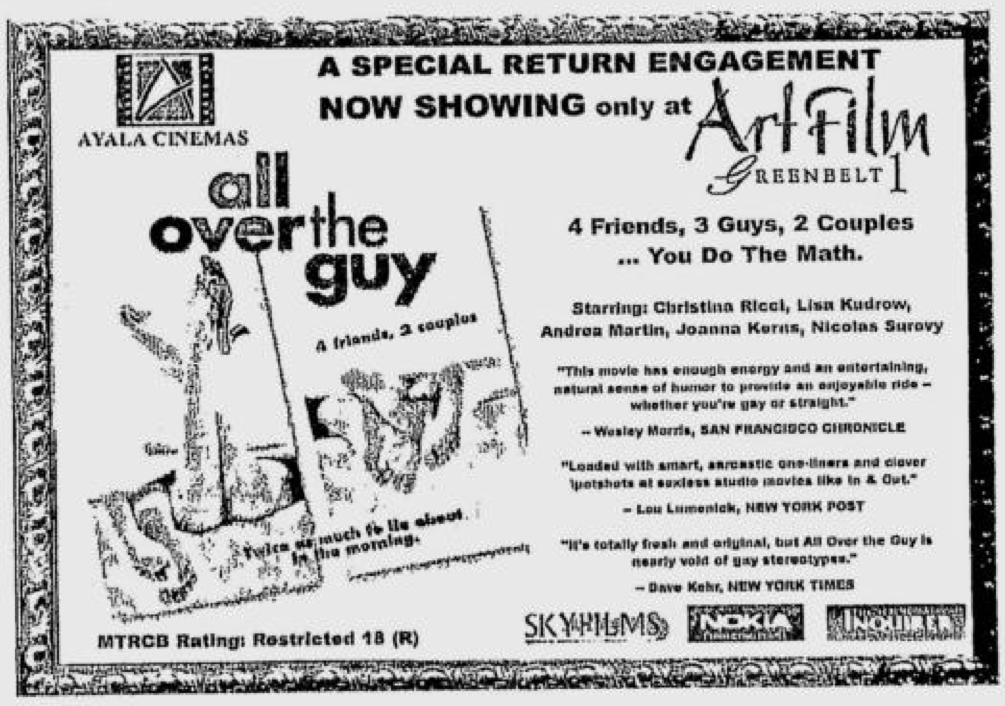
ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	8 MILE
Ali 2	THE RING
Ali 3	HOT CHICK
Ali 4	LOD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 5	TRY SEVENTEEN
Ali 6	ONE HOUR PHOTO
Ali 7	ANAYLYZE THAT
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
Farmers 2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
ARANETA COLISEUM	
JAN 24	2003 WORLD SLASHER CUP
FEB 3 & 5	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
FEB 15	ABBA TRIBUTE CONCERT
ELEPHANT WORLD	
JAN 23	10 AM / 3 PM
JAN. 22	10 AM / 3 PM / 5 PM
JAN 25	10 AM / 3 PM / 5 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	ALIAS BOMBA QUEEN / EROTIC DIARIES
ODEON	BANGKERO
ODEON-2	PAKAWALANG PUSO / APOY SA MAGDAMAG
ROBEN	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	FRAILTY / BALLISTIC
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	THE TOUCH / BALLISTIC
CORONET B	DOUBLE SEDUCTION
QUEZON-1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
REMAR	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
REMAR-2	BANGKERO
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	BANGKERO
B	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE LORD OF THE RING
CINEMA-2	ANALYZE THAT
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BANGKERO
CINEMA-2	KERIDA
CINEMA-3	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-6	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-7	DEKADA '70
CINEMA-8	MANO PO
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-12	HALF PAST DEAD
CINEMA-14	HEAVEN
CINEMA-15	RING
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LANES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA



AYALA CINEMAS
OPENS JAN. 29 only at
ArtFilm
GREENBELT 1
Off Key, aka Desafinado, is a Spanish comedy made in English featuring an international cast.
It is the story of three operatic tenors who performed all over the world together, until a disastrous performance in Mexico City, where they split for good. Now, they are getting together at the French Villa for the wedding of one of the three tenors to the daughter of another. To further complicate things, the bride's mother is married to the third trio member now. The father of the bride, who has fallen on hard times, hires a hooker to accompany him, and to help with his plot to reunite the trio as performers. The groom-to-be has a son, who isn't really his, and who secretly has the hots for the bride's mother.
Starring:
Danny Aiello, George Hamilton, Joe Mantegna
Anna Galiena & Ariadna Gil
OFFKEY
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
SKYFILMS NOKIA INQUIRER



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"This movie has enough energy and an entertaining, natural sense of humor to provide an enjoyable ride – whether you're gay or straight."
– Wesley Morris, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE
"Loaded with smart, sarcastic one-liners and clever potshots at sexless studio movies like In & Out."
– Lou Lumenick, NEW YORK POST
"It's totally fresh and original, but All Over the Guy is nearly void of gay stereotypes."
– Dave Kehr, NEW YORK TIMES
SKYFILMS NOKIA INQUIRER
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

2002 MOVIES

My own very personal, mixed list

By Irvin Contreras
Contributor

THE NEW year is almost a month old, which means it's movie awards season in Hollywood. Around this time, critics all over the world are releasing their year-end articles on the 10 best or 20 best films of the previous year and I thought, hey, why not throw my hat into the ring.

A lot of worthy film releases from 2002 have yet to be shown in the Philippines, such as Martin Scorsese's "Gangs of New York," Rob Marshall's "Chicago," Todd Haynes' "Far From Heaven," Roman Polanski's "The Pianist," Hayao Miyazaki's "Spirited Away," Stephen Daldry's "The Hours," Spike Jonze's "Adaptation," Fernando Meirielle's "City of God," Pedro Almodovar's "Talk to Her," Alexander Payne's "About Schmidt," and dozens of others, so this light could change in a big way in a matter of a few months. But here are 10 movies from among those I have seen in the previous movie year, which I thought to be notable cinematic accomplishments. It is my own mixed and very personal list.

10. "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets," directed by Christ Columbus. What can I say? I'm a Harry Potter nut and this adaptation of the second novel of the much-beloved children's fantasy series outdoes the first one in almost all departments. Special mention should be made of Roger Pratt's gorgeous cinematography and the scene-stealing antics of Kenneth Branagh in a rare case of an adult stealing the show from kids.

9. "Atanarjuat the Fast Runner," Zacharias Kunuk. I was lucky enough to catch this remarkable film in the CineManila Film Festival, where it won the Lino Brocka Award, the highest prize in the festival, last August. This one of a kind film stars and was made by Eskimos. It tells the ancient Inuit tale of an evil spirit infiltrating a tribe and causing betrayal and murder among its members. It has a documentary feel to it and it includes a scene guaranteed to make you wish you had brought a jacket into the theater.

8. "Lilo and Stitch," Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois. What do you get when you take wacky space aliens, throw them into Hawaii and mix in some Elvis music? You get one of the best hand-drawn feature-length animated movies from Disney in quite a while. It's about a space creature genetically designed to wreak havoc who finds himself in the hands of a lonely little orphan girl named Lilo, who is determined to unlock the goodness inside him through patience, love and Elvis. It is alternately hilarious and moving.

7. "Y Tu Mama Tambien," Alfonso Cuaron. I saw this also during the CineManila Film Festival. It was one of the most talked about non-English language movies of the past year and is probably the worst nightmare of the PAAP (Philippine Alliance Against Pornography, which I like to call the Philippine Association of Aged Prudes) for its explicit sex scenes.

It is a poignant comedy about two college boys, whose girlfriends are aboard, who take a road trip with an attractive older woman in hopes of having sex with her. Well, they do get it, but they get something else as well that would change their lives forever.

6. "About a Boy," Chris Weitz and Paul Weitz. This is an adaptation of Nick Hornby's best-selling novel about a self-centered bachelor whose life turns upside down when he is befriended by a lonely 12-year-old boy. The movie manages to be sweet and charming yet edgy. It also manages to be emotional and uplifting without being overly sentimental and manipulative. The movie is anchored on the performances of its three stars—Hugh Grant, Toni Collette and talented newcomer Nicholas Hoult.

5. "Dekada '70," Chito Roño. This is the best among the nine entries in the 2002 Metro Manila Film Festival. Roño brought to life in a magnificent way novelist Lualhati Bautista's tale of a typical middle-class Filipino family during the turbulent martial law years. Although far from flawless, it has many powerful moments and it avoids being too preachy. All hope is not lost for the Philippine movie industry.

4. "Signs," M. Night Shyamalan. Who knew that an alien invasion could be the backdrop for an intimate family drama? Writer-director Shyamalan ("The Sixth Sense," "Unbreakable") again shows he is a major directorial force with this one-of-a-kind science fiction-thriller. Mel Gibson plays a former minister who loses his faith after losing his wife in a car crash. It actually cares more about telling a story than showing FX-driven action sequences. It'll make you laugh, scream and cry. A popcorn movie with substance.

3. "8 Women," Francois Ozon. This is France's entry in the Best Foreign Language Film category in the Oscars. It stars eight of France's most well-known and best-loved actresses working today, including Catherine Deneuve, Fanny Ardant, Isabelle Huppert and Emmanuelle Beart. They all give delightful performances in this twisty, joyously campy musical cum murder mystery about eight women who find the family patriarch dead. One of the woman is the killer, and each woman has both motive and opportunity. Pure unbridled fun from start to finish.

2. "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers," Peter Jackson. I guess I am one of the few who think that this second installment of the trilogy is not quite as good as the first one, "The Fellowship of the Ring." Still, this is quite a stunning achievement. Even at almost three hours, it never drags, is never boring and is crafted to near perfection. I will not use up space to say what every other reviewer who liked or loved this film has said, but this I have to say: Gollum rules.

1. "Spider," David Cronenberg. I find is disheartening that this remarkable little film is getting zero buzz and will probably not get a single Oscar nomination, not even for the outstanding performances of Ralph Fiennes and Miranda Richardson. Cronenberg's masterpiece tells the tragic tale of Dennis "Spider" Clegg, who is suffering from schizophrenia.

It is dark and twisted, like only Cronenberg can make it. The film, from the performances to the cinematography to its beautiful score, left me dumbfounded like no other film did in 2002. It will go down in history as one of the most underrated films.

These movies are also noteworthy: Steven Spielberg's "Minority Report," Todd Solondz's "Storytelling," Roger Michell's "Changing Lanes," Tsai Mingliang's "What Time is it There" (a CineManila entry) and Alberto Arevalo's "Una Casa con Vista al Mar" (also a CineManila entry).

2002 has been a great movie year. Let's hope 2003 would be as good, if not better.

ALIEN INVASION. Mel Gibson stars in M. Night Shyamalan's "Signs."

NOT PREACHY. Christopher de Leon and Vilma Santos in Chito Roño's period drama, "Dekada '70."

A piece of heaven in Bohol and Cebu

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Ann Carvajal

ONE of the things I relish the most about my out-of-town trips is immersing myself in the native color and flavor of the particular province I go to. It's a pity that not all celebrities who are invited to grace provincial events have enough time to really get the feel of the local pulse of a certain place because they have to rush to their next commitment elsewhere. They also can't mingle with the crowd as much as they want to since they might be mobbed.

As for me, I always see to it that I take something deep within me (more than just *pasalubong*) every time I go back home from an out-of-town sortie.

Allow me to share with you some highlights of my Bohol and Cebu trips. Entertainment writers like me savor the rare chance of the one being entertained for a change. Amid all the VAT controversy, I must say the stars need some R and R (instead of their R and R in the streets, rallying and roaring, that is), just like what I had after my job was done in Cebu and Bohol.

While I was waiting to board the plane, I chanced upon my buddies **Marvin Agustin** and **Dominic Ochoa** who were also en route to Cebu. Marvin told me he has no plans to hold a big party on his birthday on Jan. 29. He's one guy who likes to keep it simple.

It was my first time in Tagbilaran, Bohol, which happens to be **Cesar Montano**'s hometown. In the airport, a poster of Cesar and his wife **Sunshine Cruz** is prominently displayed to welcome visitors. Cesar's award-winning movie "Muro Ami" was filmed there.

The ace actor is considered a "local treasure" in Bohol. As one Boholano told me, "Cesar's house has become a tourist spot here. We are proud of him because he does not forget his roots and he has remained down-to-earth."

I was billeted at the breathtaking Bohol Beach Club (owned by Tambuli Resorts). The sizzling 2003 FHM calendar with sexy stars **Maui Taylor, Diana Zubiri** and **Aubrey Miles**, was shot at Bohol Beach Club.

The gracious staff, especially the cool resident manager **Tony Ceniza** and the muy simpatico sales manager **Allan Santos** made me feel like staying there for good.

Special thanks also to **Mar Uy, Nancy Doydora** and **Delilah Biliran** (of Jollibee Alturas) for giving me and my fun travelmates **Emma San Juan, Baby Orquia, Pabs** and **Dawn Formaran,** and **Cleofe Belargo** an overdose of Boholano hospitality.

Next to Palawan, the Bohol beach is ranked as the second best dive spot in the country. Allan took me on a glass bottom boat trip and I was amazed to see how crystal clear the waters were.

I immensely enjoyed the private tour Allan gave me. First stop was the famed Chocolate Hills. The 2000 plus mounds is quite a sight to behold especially when you go up the 214 steps to check out the spectacular view.

Then we proceeded to see the tarsier, the world's smallest monkey.

We later had a sumptuous lunch at Loboc Riverview Resto, which also has a Riverwatch Floating Restaurant, complete

A PIECE/ A24

Choreographer realizes a dream

By Leah Salterio

WHEN contemporary jazz dancer and choreographer Para Isidro was watching the musical, "Rent," in November 2001; she was so impressed with the performance of Bituin Escalante that Para immediately envisioned a unique kind of show, with Bituin as one of the main performers.

"While watching Bituin perform, I told myself she would be great onstage doing what she loves best," shares Para, who choreographed "Rent" and "Miss Saigon."

"Bituin can sing with two other artists from different mediums. In the cast party of 'Rent,' I offered her to do a Valentine show, with my concept in mind. But it took us a year later to finally present it."

Para is aware, however, that she needed two other artists who could match the character, powerful stage presence and vocal prowess of Bituin onstage.

"I needed two other people with the same balance and energy," Para says. "I said I would not do the show until I get the three right people."

During a break in Thailand, Para saw jazz guitarist Tanapat Mathayomchand in the latter's stint at Dusit Hotel in Bangkok.

"The way I saw him perform, I knew he and Bituin would be perfect together onstage," she grants.

Para lost no time in talking to Tanapat and offering him to perform in Manila. What surprised her more was Tanapat's illustrious career as a performer and formidable background as a musician.

The artist is a graduate of Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he lived for 13 years. He has performed with some of the great names in jazz like Barry White, Kool and the Gang, and the Grammy Award-winning group Tavares.

Tanapat also taught in Boston and in Thailand. Aside from jazz, he plays Jewish music, rock and pop.

Thankfully, the Thai guitarist was immediately receptive to the offer.

"I thought it would be nice to do a show outside Thailand," says Tanapat, who is a first-time Manila visitor. "I am very excited by the opportunity to perform in the Philippines."

With partner James With, Para put up Balcony Entertainment to produce "Have I Told You Today That I Love You?," a live show that highlights voice, dance and music, Jan. 24 and 25 at the Music Museum. Featured artists are Para, with Bituin and Tanapat.

Para, who is a founding member of Douglas Nierras' Powerdance, launched Balcony Entertainment with a vision of staging personally inspired productions and at the same time cater to the increasing demands of the local corporate community for quality live performances.

Para brings with her 23 years of dance expertise to Balcony Entertainment.

"With Balcony, I am finally beginning to realize a dream I've had for many years," enthuses Para. "With my partners at Balcony, I now have a great team to support me that can reach out to the community in so many ways and share a wealth of professional experience with everyone."

Through Balcony Entertainment, Para also aims to launch local projects abroad and bring them to the international touring circuit. She plans to start with "Have I Told You Today That I Love You?" The world premiere is directed by Douglas Nierras and produced with Tri-Us Entertainment Limited.

Para shares the inspiration for the title of the show came from her favorite song, "No Day But Today," in "Rent."

"That musical ('Rent') played a great part in putting this show to reality," Para says. "I did not only work for that show as its choreographer, it also became a big part of what I've been doing now and in the future."

James With, who acts as executive producer, explains "Have I Told You Today...?" seeks to highlight and maximize the full potential of each talent.

"The show is going to be a full production with lighting and special effects never been tried before in a live medium," With points out. "It's a unique treat with dance, music and voice in one show. There is immediate interest with three dynamic performers doing different presentations onstage."

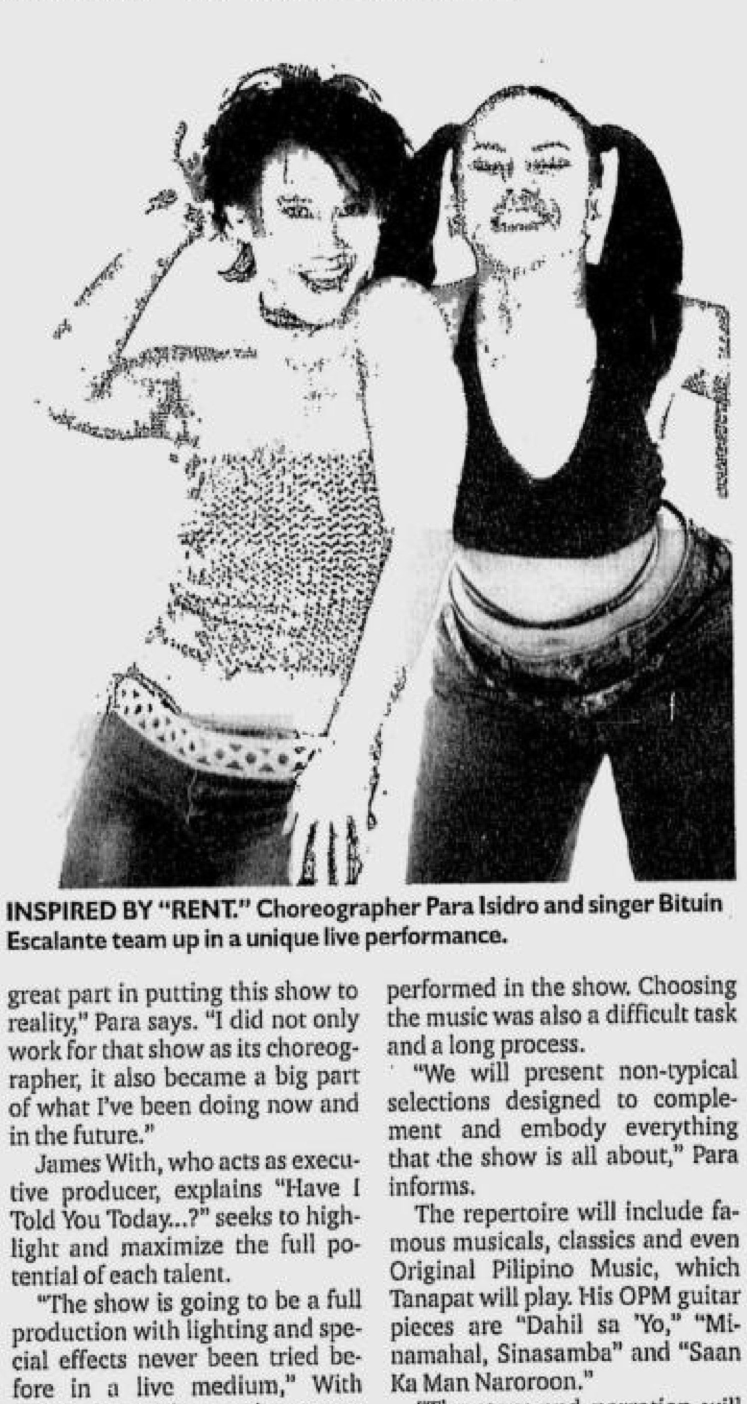
Para attests it was a challenge for them to integrate the concept into the selection of songs to be performed in the show. Choosing the music was also a difficult task and a long process.

"We will present non-typical selections designed to complement and embody everything that the show is all about," Para informs.

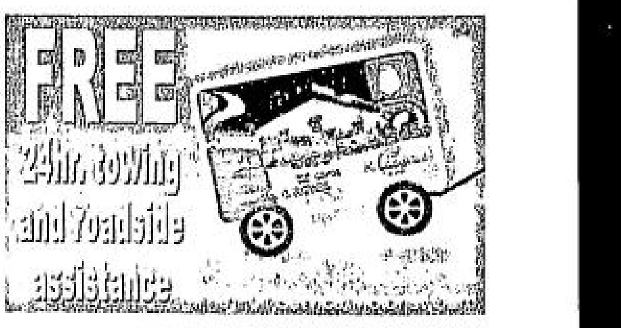
The repertoire will include famous musicals, classics and even Original Pilipino Music, which Tanapat will play. His OPM guitar pieces are "Dahil sa 'Yo," "Minamahal, Sinasamba" and "Saan Ka Man Naroroon."

"The story and narration will be expressed and integrated through singing, playing and dancing," says With.

"The juxtaposition of the numbers symbolize the dynamism and evolution that goes through in life through the solos, duets and trios."



INSPIRED BY "RENT." Choreographer Para Isidro and singer Bituin Escalante team up in a unique live performance.



BUSINESS

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Editor Raul O. Marcelo ◎ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

VAT deferment to bloat 2003 deficit

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT would miss its deficit target this year of P202 billion if Congress would give in to the lobbying by entertainers and other professionals for an extension of their exemption from the 10-percent value-added tax.

The exemption of professionals from the VAT had been depriving the government of P8.6 billion in revenues a year.

Last year's budget deficit reached P212.68 billion, or equivalent to 5.3 percent of the country's gross domestic product, as total revenues reached P566.03 billion while expenditures stood at P778.72 billion.

In December, the budget gap slid to P12.1 billion from P13 billion the previous month.

To cover the revenue shortfall and increased spending, the government was forced to borrow P264.176 billion against a target of P111.81 billion.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday said that the P8.6 billion in additional revenues from the VAT to be imposed on professionals were part of the government's fiscal assumptions for this year.

"If the VAT on professionals is deferred, it will be a big setback to our fiscal program," he said. Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said that the 2003 deficit could hit P210 billion if the collection of VAT on those earning talent and consulting fees would be 'suspended again.

Professionals and banks have been exempt from VAT since the law was passed in 1996. The exemption finally lapsed in 2002 and in the absence of a new law extending the VAT freeze, the Bureau of Internal Revenue issued a regulation requiring professionals to start paying the 10-percent indirect tax starting January 2003.

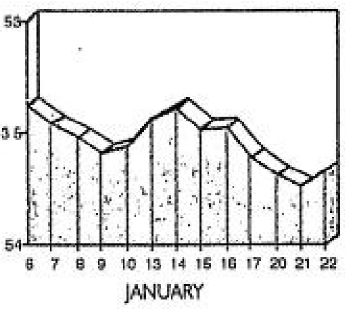
Camacho assured that this year, the government would do its best to contain the fiscal gap within the target.

Unlike in 2002, the finance chief said the government would not front-load the payment for contractual obligations nor release notices of cash allocations ahead of schedule. On the collection side, Camacho vowed to pursue reforms in the BIR and the Bureau of Customs.

The finance chief said that despite the "encouraging" 2002 deficit that was P10 billion lower than the final revised figure of P223 billion but P83 billion more than the original forecast of P130 billion, the government would keep this year's target at P202 billion or 4.6 percent of GDP.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P P53.675 $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 22, 2003

¥ 118.17= $1

As of 5 p.m., Jan:22, 2003

GOLD: $358.75-359.15

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 22, 2003

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower

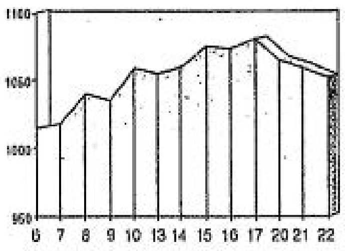
STOCKS closed lower for a third straight session yesterday, with investors exiting the market over heightened jitters about a possible war in Iraq, traders said.

The main stock index ended down 7.63 points, or 0.72 percent, at 1,052.44 points.

Turnover was a paltry P147.02 million from Tuesday's P154.38 million, reflecting market caution about the possibility of war.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

JANUARY



(See stock market report on Page B2)

On Tuesday, US President George Bush, showing increasing signs of impatience with Baghdad, warned that Iraq was running out of time to comply with requests to surrender its alleged weapons of mass destruction.

His comments, along with a continued US and British troop build up in the Gulf, saw Wall Street slide for a fourth straight session and crude oil futures touch a 26-month high.

"The external developments over recent days seem to have nipped our little rally in the bud," said Andrew Long, research head at ATR Kim Eng Securities.

Reuters

IFC, ADB pursüe bid to buy RP banks' bad debts

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE INTERNATIONAL Finance Corp. and the Asian Development Bank are tying up with a US-based distressed debt specialist and one or more local groups to put up a local asset management company that would acquire as much as $100 million in non-performing assets of Philippine financial institutions.

The recently enacted Special Purpose Vehicle Act provides incentives for financial institutions to sell their bad assets to asset management companies or special purpose vehicles.

"We're hoping in the next few months (to set up the AMC) but we have to wait obviously for the implementing regulations (of the SPV) to be issued," IFC country manager for the Philippine Vipul Bhagat said in an interview Tuesday evening.

The SPV implementing rules and regulations are targeted to be released by the end of this month.

Bhagat declined to identify their US partner at this time but said that the latter was not an investment bank but had the skills and technology for management of distressed debt, including bad loans and real and other property owned or acquired (ropoa) accounts.

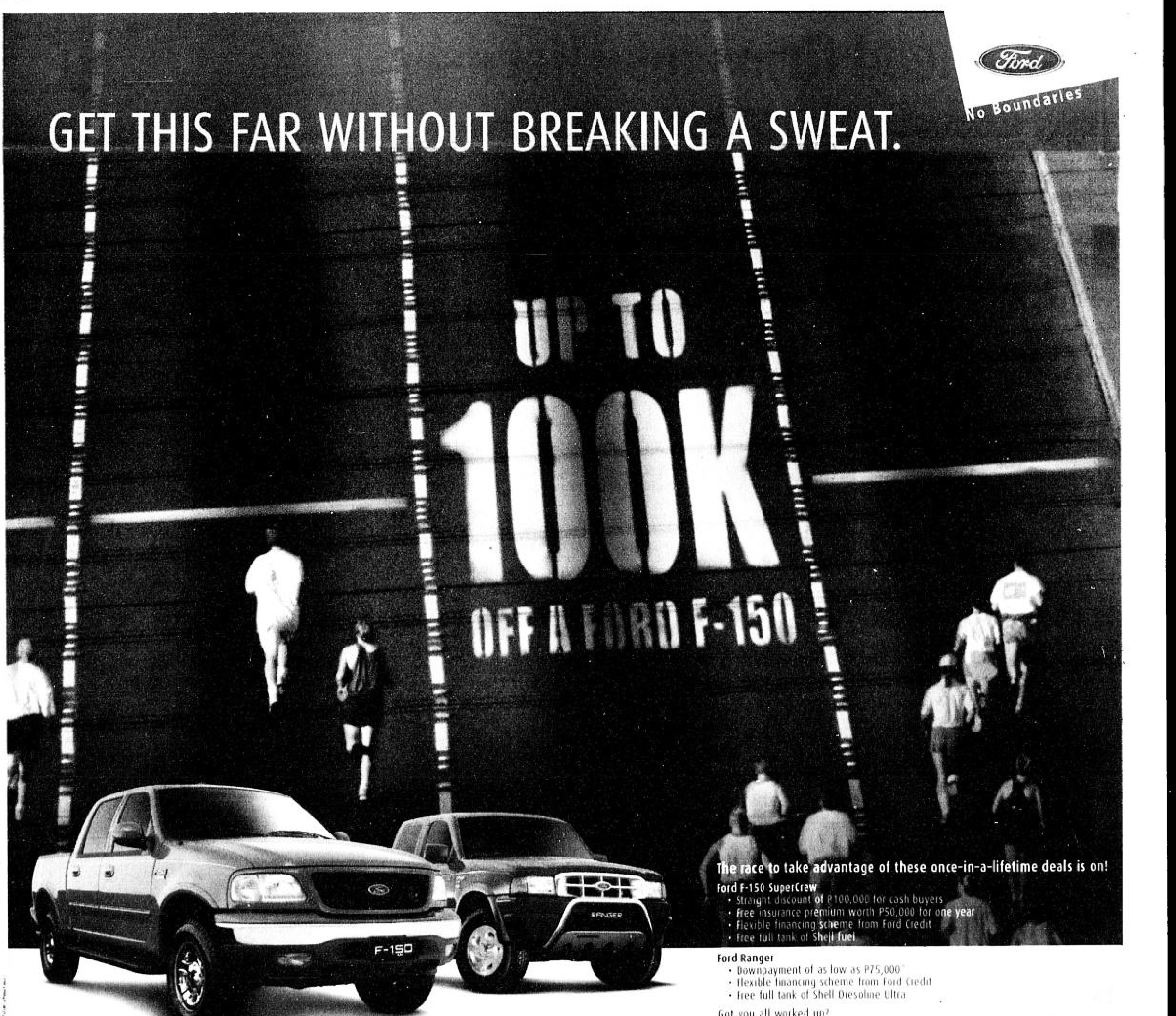
He added that the local partners of IFC and ADB could be banks, real estate developers and other parties that have some value-added from a local perspective.

"We don't want to be in a situation where people perceive outsiders coming in and buying all these assets cheaply and running away. We very much intend this to be a Filipino institution," Bhagat said.

He estimated that the amount of investment to be infused into the AMC would be from $50 million to $100 milion.

IFC has made similar investments in other Asian countries.

In China, IFC invested in a portfolio of non-performing assets bought by a bank. It worked together with investment firms Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs.



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Follow the leather

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

OUR leader, who is still Gloriaetta, just in case you are entertaining some ideas, discovered only recently that she needed to talk about her plan to declare war against corruption.

Immediately you have to worry where this country is heading.

It was dramatic, and as such, it packed a wallop of a headline. I confess that we in media are longing for a true leader. Today, Gloriaetta seems to fill the job description.

But it was also a little bit funny, this feeling inside ... no, that's the song.

What I'm saying is, the declaration should only invite more jeers than cheers. As some business leaders already said, it was a little bit late in the day.

The President of the Republic does not have to declare war against corruption. Fighting corruption is part of the job from Day 1.

If she finds the need for an all-out war today, it only goes to show that things got worse during her watch.

Thus, she only opens herself up to attacks from her critics, and they are many. They can claim that she was sleeping on the job. Go ahead, ask Raul.

* * *

BUT if you look deep into all the corruption issues raging today, you will realize that they actually started many moons ago.

This cute administration of Gloriaetta merely inherited the cases against Piatco, Impsa, or the IPPs. They came about during the watch of Kuya Eddie.

Take the Piatco contract for Naia Terminal 3. Awarded by the government to the Cheng group under the Ramos administration, the contract exploded only recently.

Something happened. And that is, those who would get hurt by the contract, actually, realized a bit too late that it would fry all of them alive.

It's always a problem of transparency. For whatever reasons, i.e. hundreds of millions of white hair, big contracts are hidden from the public.

Up to now, the Piatco contract has yet to be made public. Yet you and I will pay for it all, including the ... well, generous tips.

* * *

THOSE tips, as you know, are never talked about in public. Even the PAGC is silent on the money angle. t is just implied that money changed hands.

The PAGC filed administrative cases of graft and corruption against those who had anything to do with the government approval of the Piatco contract.

How much money changed hands in the deal, even the PAGC cannot say. It just claims that there was something wrong in the approval process.

In that case, they can simply use the alibi that they were stupid. They did not follow the procedure because they did not know any better.

Now, being stupid is not an excuse under the law. But you don't go to jail because of it. Look, if being stupid is a crime, many congressmen and senators should be in jail.

* * *

BUT the thing is, we must find out how much money actually changed hands. We have to get it all back. And this, I think, should be the target of Gloriaetta's war.

Me, I will follow the leader to hell, and then back, if she can recover just a pinch of all those billions which we lost due to corruption.

Sure, I want to see some of those white collar bad guys follow each other into jail, and there, they should take some leather belt beatings from some Tondo tough guys.

But I also want our money back. Even in jail, money talks. Those bad guys will still live it up in jail. They will not get the leather beatings they richly deserve.

Besides, we can use a couple of billions of their loot. The cost of Naia Terminal 3 project, for instance, went from $200 million to $600 million.

I think that's a lot of money just for tips.

* * *

WORST of all, we are paying for it all. And so if you don't mind, boss, I have a little suggestion. Why don't we conduct a nice little audit?

Maybe PAGC can find the proof for the, er, "generosity" of Piatco.

And just take a loot at that. The PAGC filed cases against some minor characters in the Piatco mess, such as Naia general manger Ed Manda. Who he, really?

What happened to all the former Cabinet members who approved the contract? They were on top of the whole thing. Don't tell me they got pardoned this early.

* * *

AS for the Impsa deal, it all started a long long time ago from far far away. A group from Argentina came over to see what project they could get. From out of the blue!

Argentina never had any interest here. All of a sudden, this Impsa group wanted to take over the hydro power complex called CBK, without its being asked by anybody.

Impsa was a problem ever since. And all because the administration of Kuya Eddie was going for an ex-deal with Argentina.

For a local boy to get a project in Argentina, you see, at least according to the talk way back then, an Argentine company must do the same here.

You know—scratch my back, I scratch you behind.

Unfortunately, all our former finance secretaries did not want to scratch Impsa's behind. They did not want to issue Impsa a financial guarantee.

And that's why the whole thing went to the Department of Justice, in a passing-the-buck sort of way. And that's why the DOJ sat on it until ... well, you know the rest.

* * *

ANYWAY, Energy Secretary Vincent "the Silent" Perez said that we just could not cancel the Impsa deal.

Now Vincent the Silent speaks with authority, because he is one of the Wall Street type guys in this cute administration.

He knows a lot of things which we, the public, can't even begin to try to understand even if we try.

Canceling the deal, according to Vincent the Silent, is bad for us. For one, he said, we might scare away future investors in the energy sector.

We are trying to privatize Napocor. We need those investors. Vincent the Silent fears that they may think, what if the Impsa thing happens to them too.

Apparently investors do not want us to change anything in a contract even if it kills us. A contract is a contract, no matter how dirty it was done, in the first place.

After all, who needs honest investors. Let all the bad guys from abroad come here. We are ready. We already have a leader who is waging war against corruption.

2 pre-need firms lose licenses

By Elena R. Torrijos

TWO small pre-need companies will not be allowed to operate this year after failing to meet the Securities and Exchange Commission's minimum capital requirements.

SEC said it had suspended the permits to sell of Pension and Retirement Plans Corp. last June and of Celestial Memorial Life Plan Inc. last September.

"They will no longer be allowed to renew their dealer's licenses for 2003," the SEC said.

The corporate watchdog said the two pre-need companies were unable to put up the P50-million minimum capital requirement for one-type plans.

The SEC's new rules governing the pre-need industry require a minimum paid-up capital of P100 million as an entry requirement for new pre-need firms while existing companies were required to meet the said capital level by April 30 last year.

These companies are allowed to sell three types of pre-need plans if they have at least P100 million in paid-up capital; two types of plans if they have at least P75 million, and only one type of plan if they have a capital of at least P50 million.

Twelve pre-need companies met the P100-million paid-up capital requirement while 10 and 24 companies hit the P75 million and P50 million capital levels, respectively.

In addition to the minimum paid-up capital requirement, the New Pre-Need Rules also require education and pension plan providers to deposit a minimum of 51 percent of their collection in a trust fund. Other prudential measures adopted by the Commission last year included:

- Adoption of an investment portfolio mix for trust funds to provide for the funds' liquidity and capital growth.
- Strict compliance monitoring of monthly deposits to the trust fund.
- Adoption of a pre-need uniform chart of accounts for a more accurate accounting and reporting of financial condition of pre-need companies.
- Imposition of increased accountability of accountants and actuaries.
- Imposition of limits in the payment of the agents' commissions.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 22, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco De Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	18,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	37	38	37	37.5	517,100
China Banking Corp.	630	630	630	630	70
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	27	27	27	27	2,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31	30.5	30.5	76,400
Philippine National Bank	26	26	26	26	3,400
Security Bank Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,100
Union Bank Of The Phil.	17	17	17	17	3,100
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	200,000
Manulife Financial Corp..	1220	1220	1220	1220	800
Commercial & Industrial					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	13,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	740,000
Globe Telecom Inc..	510	510	495	495	1,310
ISM Communications Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	2,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.4	3.45	3.4	3.45	9,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	315	317.5	310	312.5	29,200
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	11,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.8	8.8	8.6	8.8	417,000
Manila Electric Co. B	12.75	12.75	12.25	12.5	888,900
Petron Corp.	1.6	1.62	1.6	1.6	964,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l SV	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	3,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	20,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	50,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17	17	17	17	354,100
La Tondeña Distillers,Inc.	35	35	35	35	1,300
RFM Corp..	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	100,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57	57.5	57	57.5	110,200
San Miguel Corp. B	63	63.5	62.5	63.5	253,600
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.35	4.35	614,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.32	2.32	2.32	2.32	1,128,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11	11	11	11	300
A. Soriano Cor..	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.58	11,150,000
APC Group Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	400,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	2,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.155	0.155	0.15	0.15	1,850,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	90,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	1,000,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	3,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	0.96	0.96	0.92	0.92	20,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	9.5	9.5	9.3	9.3	366,000
Ionics Inc.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	420,000
J.G. Summit Holdings, Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	253,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	420,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.16	0.165	0.155	0.16	2,060,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	8,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	30,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	1,240,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	1,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.6	140,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.25	441,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp..	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	410,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.29	0.31	0.29	0.31	80,000
Philippine Racing Club	4	4	4	4	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	34,100
Jollibee Warrants	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	20,400
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.1	5.1	5	5	5,436,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	500,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	800,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.96	0.97	0.94	0.95	3,940,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	1,483,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	50,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	19,170,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.23	0.235	0.23	0.235	290,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	1,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	860,000
OIL					
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	100,000
Pacifica	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	2,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	823,970	23,415,375.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	41,610,473	80,622,747.00
PRO	12,169,000	39,184,700.00
Mining	72,420,000	4,775,300.00
OIL	2,100,000	33,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	129,113,443	148,031,122.00
	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	386.00	UP 1.96
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,493.82	DOWN 14.18
PRO	453.67	DOWN 5.15
Mining	1,338.69	UP 30.08
OIL	1.03	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	648.32	DOWN 4:33
Composite	1,052.44	DOWN 7.63

NO. OF ADVANCES: 13; NO. OF DECLINES: 23; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 39; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 75; NO. OF TRADES: 1,085

DISCLOSURES

LA TONDEÑA Distillers Inc. bought 11,000 of its owns shares at P35 per share.

* * *

DIGITAL Telecommunications Philippines Inc. clarified that it had yet to set a date for the official commercial launch of its cellular business.

* * *

ACESITE (Philippines) Hotel Corp. disclosed the pre-termination of its hotel management agreement with **Holiday Inns (Philippines) Inc.** effective Feb. 28, 2003. HIPI said the life of the agreement was supposed to end on Jan. 1, 2005 but added that the current state of the hotel was no longer in keeping with the norms of a "Holiday Inn" hotel.

* * *

BANK of the Philippine Islands will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 3, 2003.

* * *

FAR Eastern University will increase its authorized capital stock from P300 million to P1 billion. It also declared stock dividends involving 1.84 million shares with a par value of P184 million to be derived from the capital increase.

* * *

CENTRAL Azucarera de Tarlac appointed Arcadio Lopez and Fernando Cojuangco compliance officers to take charge of the company's manual on corporate governance. For the company's manual on anti-money laundering, Miguelito Atienza was named compliance and reporting officer.

* * *

METROPOLITAN Bank and Trust Co. confirmed reports that it was planning to dispose of P11 billion worth of foreclosed assets. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

Jan. 22, 2003

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.932053	1	53.73
Japan	Yen	0.007888	0.008463	0.4547
United Kingdom	Pound	1.507876	1.6178	86.9244
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.11951	0.128222	6.8894
Switzerland	Franc	0.683975	0.733837	39.4291
Canada	Dollar	0.608271	0.652614	35.065
Singapore	Dollar	0.537609	0.576801	30.9915
Australia	Dollar	0.545795	0.585583	31.4634
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.472355	2.65259	142.5237
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.248541	0.26666	14.3276
Brunei	Dollar	0.536063	0.575142	30.9024
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000105	0.000113	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.021787	0.023375	1.2559
UAE	Dirham	0.253772	0.272272	14.6292
Euro	Euro	1	1.0729	57.6469
Argentina	Peso	0.298735	0.320513	17.2212
Brazil	Real	0.268603	0.288184	15.4841
Denmark	Kroner	0.134476	0.144279	7.7521
India	Rupee	0.019442	0.020859	1.1208
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.24531	0.263193	14.1414
Mexico	New Peso	0.086066	0.09234	4.9614
New Zealand	Dollar	0.506385	0.543301	29.1916
Norway	Kroner	0.134692	0.144511	7.7646
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016084	0.017256	0.9272
South Africa	Rand	0.103347	0.110881	5.9576
Korea	Won	0.000793	0.000851	0.0457
Sweden	Kroner	0.108151	0.116035	6.2346
Syria	Pound	0.018098	0.019417	1.0433
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.02686	0.028818	1.5484
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000493	0.000529	0.0284

BCDA to decide on John Hay debt relief plea

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Vincent Cabreza,
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

THE BASES Conversion Development Authority is set to decide on Feb. 4 a proposal by the Fil-Estate group to restructure its unpaid lease rentals worth roughly P1 billion in the Camp John Hay project.

BCDA president Rufo Colayco said a team of BCDA officers reviewing Fil-Estate's restructuring plan would submit the results of its study to the John Hay Management Corp. (JHMC) on Friday before it would be taken up by the BCDA board.

Colayco stressed the BCDA has not made any final decision on the Camp John Hay project.

He said said the BCDA would decide whether to agree to a restructuring of Fil-Estate's unpaid dues and relax the terms of the lease contract specifically in the development schedule of Camp John Hay.

The Fil-Estate-controlled Camp John Hay Development Corp. has to pay P425 million in annual lease payments for the first five years of the contract (the first payment was made in 1997) or 5 percent of gross revenues (whichever is higher) and P150 million annually for the rest of the 25-year contract (which is renewable for another 25 years).

Earlier, John Hay Poro Point Development Corp., BCDA's estate manager for the Camp John Hay project, endorsed the termination of the John Hay lease contract for the developer's failure to build a P2.6-billion leisure resort in the former American reservation in Baguio City.

Honorio Carlos Estepa, a JPDC board member, said the endorsement was contained in a board resolution on Thursday.

The John Hay debts had fueled a political debate at City Hall because the city government owns a one-percent share from the CJHDevco rent proceeds.

Councilor Braulio Yaranon, a critic of the John Hay lease, blamed the city government for failing to lobby hard for the recovery of the John Hay rent.

But CJHDevco officials said the Jan. 16 resolution might have been issued in bad faith because it preempted the concluding negotiations between their firm and the BCDA for an agreement that would allow them a debt reprieve.

"Is the government ready to take over (the CJHDevco's 242-hectare property)? They may be looking at its assets but they will also have to deal with its liabilities," a CJHDevco source said.

CJHDevco now operates the John Hay Manor, the John Hay clubhouse and the CAP Insurance-financed trade and cultural convention center.

CJHDevco is set to launch on Thursday (Jan. 23) the construction of the Manor's companion hotel called the John Hay Suites.

"We are about to close a memorandum of agreement that will resolve all these problems," said lawyer Gina Alvarez, the consortium's chief counsel.

The negotiations began during Estrada's term.

Robert Sobrepeña, Fil-Estate chair and president of CJHDevco, said the government had failed to clear the John Hay lease property of its legal encumbrances when it released the land to the CJHDevco. This has contributed to the delay in the resort's development, he said.

He said the relinquished John Hay property also fell short of the 290-hectare development area that was specified during the lease contract's bidding eight years ago.

The Fil Estate consortium assumed the lease from the winning bidder, Manuela Lands, which abandoned the project over contract disputes with the government.

Napocor coal supply auction postponed

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE AUCTION of the contracts for National Power Corp.'s much-needed coal supply was again postponed following the enactment of a law on government purchases.

Originally set for early November last year, the bidding was first postponed due to an executive order requiring the bidders for government contracts to be at least 60-percent Filipino owned.

The original schedule was designed so that deliveries would start coming in by early January to replenish dwindling supply.

With the further delay in the auction, Napocor expressed fears that its existing coal inventory would go down to "critical" levels which could affect its power generation capability.

Napocor has six major coal-fired power plants that supply about 40 percent of the country's power requirements.

Napocor sources most of its coal requirements from foreign producers and traders, mainly from China and Indonesia.

In an interview, a Napocor official said the state firm was seeking approval from the Department of Budget and Management to proceed with the bidding under the provisions of the Government Procurement Act.

The new law favors bidding procedures similar to what Napocor has been using for the past two years, but Napocor can not go ahead with the bidding until after the implementing rules and regulations of the law are approved.

"We hope that we could secure the go-ahead to conduct the first of the four auctions on Jan. 24," the official said.

He added that Napocor has not set even tentative dates for the other batches.

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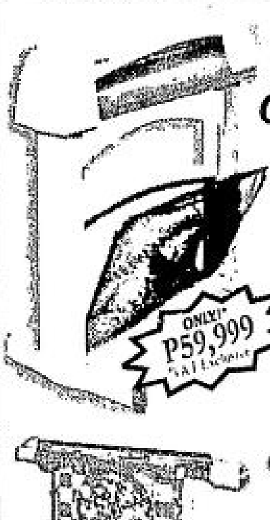
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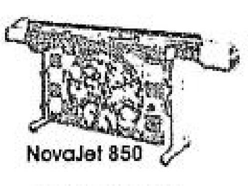
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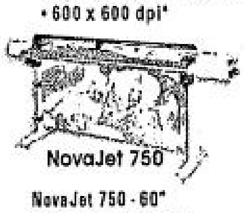
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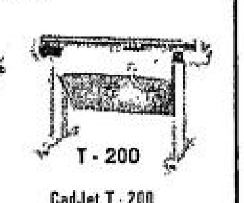
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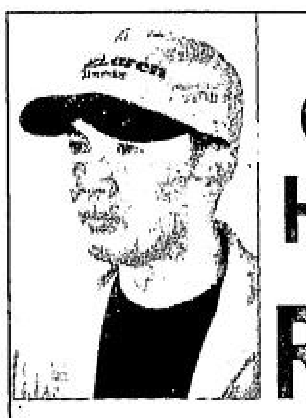

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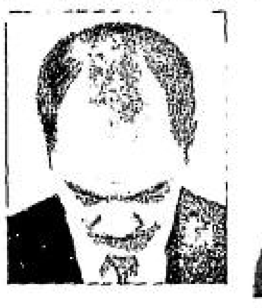

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UNWIND 752-0437

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VIP-M/F-09192714842 ANJO

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Edward 7289285 09193365411

FEELS GOOD 4127758

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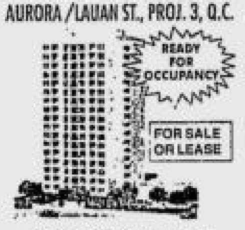

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Division Chief, Recruitment Division
SBMA-Labor Center
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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5276418

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is given that the estate of the late ANATALIA E. FUNTALVA was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc#446, Page#90, Book#XXV, Series of 2002, under Notary Public Fernando Collantes of Manila.
(PDI-Jan. 9, 16 & 23, 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late HILARIA V AUDENCIAL with waiver of rights has been extrajudicially settled among her brothers and sisters as per Doc. No. 85; Page No. 73; Book No. V; Series of 2002 before Notary Public Atty. Jose D. Miguel of Cuyapo Nueva Ecija.
(PDI- Jan. 9, 16 & 23, 2003)

NOTICE OF LOSS

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Fidel Cuachua

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Republic of the Philippines
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF PASSENGER ELEVATORS** for the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The approved budget for this contract is P 10,879,230.00.

All interested parties are invited to attend the Pre-Bid Conference that will be held on February 6, 2003, 9:30 a.m. at the PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting January 23, 2003 upon payment of non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (Php 2,000.00).

The bidders shall submit their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes at the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on February 25, 2003 at 9:30 a.m.

For more information, please call the PS-Purchasing Division at telephone nos. 563-94-02 or 563-93-74.

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO P. OPIDA
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI--Jan. 23 & 30, 2003)

AUCTION

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AUCTION DATE: SATURDAY 25TH JANUARY 2003 2:00PM SHARP
VIEWING DATE: SATURDAY 25TH JANUARY 2003 9:00AM - 2:00PM
AUCTION SITE: KEPPEL COMMUNICATIONS PHILIPPINES, INC.
7/F EQUITABLE TOWER, PASEO DE ROXAS, MAKATI CITY
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PROVINCE OF BATANGAS
Batangas City

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the projects described below are invited to submit their Application for Eligibility to Bid with the ***Provincial Government of Batangas.*** Only eligible contractors will be invited to participate in the forthcoming bidding.

A. Name of Projects : 1. South Luzon Tollway Extension Project (Calamba City to Sto.Tomas, Batangas Section)
2. Extension of Southern Tagalog Access Road (STAR) from Sto.Tomas, Batangas Section to Batangas City Section

B. Scope of Work : Construction of the above projects in their entirety or in segments/packages to be defined in the Bid Documents

C. Required PCAB Registration and Classification : "AAA" Large B

D. Cost of Prequalification Documents : PhP 5,000.00 (non-refundable)

E. Deadline of Submission of Accomplished Prequalification Documents : February 7, 2003

Place of Issuance : PBAC Secretariat Office of the Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator Province of Batangas Capitol Site, Batangas City

G. Time and date of the **Pre-Bid Conference**, the **submission and opening of bids** shall be indicated in the **Notice of Eligibility**

Only contractors classified and registered with the Philippine Contractors' Accreditation Board (PCAB) with the appropriate Contractor's License and Registration Particulars will be issued Eligibility Forms. The Forms are available at the PBAC Secretariat, Office of the Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator, Province of Batangas, Capitol Site, Batangas City beginning on the first day of publication of this advertisement. Interested applicants are required to bring a letter of intent and original copy of the Contractor's valid PCAB License for verification/ authentication purposes.

All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and awards of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Executive Order No. 40, Series of 2001.

Further information may be obtained from the following:

PBAC Secretariat : Tel. Nos. (043) 723-3286; (043) 723-4397; (043) 980-82-43

The Provincial Government of Batangas reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any informality in the proposals received and to accept such bid most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) HERMILANDO I. MANDANAS
Governor, Province of Batangas

(PDI-Jan. 23, 2003)

TIME TO PAY UP

Mabuhay Vinyl loses ₱119-M tax deficiency case

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COURT of Tax Appeals has ordered petrochemical firm Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. to pay over P119.2 million in unpaid taxes.

The tax court ordered Mabuhay Vinyl to pay P119.2 million worth of withholding tax due in 1988 and 1989, and a 20-percent interest on this amount computed from Feb. 24, 1998.

Mabuhay Vinyl is the country's first and largest manufacturer of caustic soda and polyvinyl chloride resins—raw materials in most plastic products.

Originally incorporated to produce rubber shoes in 1934, the company shifted to chemical and resin production in 1966.

The company now claims to be the biggest domestic producer of caustic soda and, together with subsidiary Philippine Resins Industries Inc., is the biggest producer of PVC resins.

It also enjoys a big share of the local hydrochloric acid and chlorine markets.

The tax case stems from a tax dispute filed with the CTA in 1997.

In this case, Mabuhay Vinyl contested the Bureau of Internal Revenue's claims that it failed to pay some P776.99 million worth of withholding and income taxes in 1988 and 1989.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Mabuhay Vinyl corporate secretary Melva Valdez said the company would contest the CTA's ruling.

"We believe that the CTA erred in ordering such payment of deficiency withholding tax, considering that the Bureau of Internal Revenue's assessment has no legal basis," Valdez said.

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Level 2, AYALA CENTER CEBU, Cebu Business Park, Cebu City

Gov't saves ₱18B in interest payments

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT paid more debts than it incurred in December and saved about P18.5 billion in interest payments for the whole of last year on lower interest rates, the Department of Finance disclosed yesterday.

"Net financing in December was negative P18.4 billion, indicating larger repayments than borrowings, which was made possible by prefunding of the 2002 budget," Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said.

The government borrowed a total of P264.2 billion last year, more than double the previous year's P111.8 billion.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said, meantwhile, that the government saved about P18.5 billion in interest payments last year against a target of P12 billion because of lower domestic rates.

Low interest rates in 2002 year made the shift to longer-term local borrowings less costly for the government, as the average five-year treasury bond fell to 11.94 percent from 15.2 percent in 2001.

The 91-day treasury bill rate averaged 5.85 percent last year from 9.8 percent in 2001. The benchmark interest rate dropped to a record low of 4.299 percent in April.

SEC approves Philtread rights offering

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has approved Philtread Holdings Corp.'s rights offering to raise nearly P1 billion for the acquisition of ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners Inc., an investment house.

The rights offering will pave the way for the backdoor listing of ATRKE Capital.

The purchase price of ATRKE Capital has initially been fixed at P1.107 billion.

Philtread will pay for the difference in the purchase price and the net proceeds of the rights offering by issuing a five-year promissory note.

The net proceeds from the rights offer is estimated to reach P956.5 million.

Under the rights offering, Philtread will issue 499.99 million common shares with a par value of P1 per share at an offer price of P2 per share.

Those who subscribe to the shares in the rights offering will then be issued for free one warrant for every five shares subscribed.

Each warrant will entitle the holder to subscribe to one common share of the company upon payment of the exercise price of P2 per share. The exercise period shall be on any trading day within two years from listing day.

Review of Mt. Diwalwal gold contracts ordered

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources has ordered a review of the contracts granted to small-scale miners working on the Diwalwal mining area in Compostela Valley in Mindanao.

Mines and Geosciences Bureau director Horace Ramos said in an interview Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun suspended these contracts, as she wanted to review agreements entered into by her predecessor, former Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez.

On Dec. 9, two warring groups of small-scale miners entered into separate agreements with the government for the orderly resumption of mining operations in Diwalwal.

Some 2,000 people have died because of landslides, cave-ins and violence between warring factions spanning 19 years since the Diwalwal gold rush began.

The DENR, under Alvarez, signed separate agreements with the Compostela Valley Federation of Mining Cooperatives, which has about 5,000 members, and a group of some 300 miners led by one Pedro Francisco.

The agreements awarded the groups separate mining service contracts, through the DENR's Natural Resources Development Corp.

The MGB's Ramos said Gozun wanted these contracts reviewed, citing environmental concerns.

He said the government decided to stop operations in Diwalwal for at least six months to look into concerns over pollution and ownership affecting the area.

However, some of the 30,000 small-scale miners dependent on mining the Diwalwal tunnels for livelihood will be allowed to continue working so long as they will not use explosives and maintain small mine tailing ponds, he said.

The government is building a P50-million mine tailings dam to contain pollution resulting from ining activities in Diwalwal.

BSP allows microfinance banks to open branches

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has allowed newly established "microfinance-oriented" banks that expect to be profitable in three years to put up branches.

In a statement issued yesterday, the central bank said it relaxed one of its circulars that required "microfinance-oriented" banks to become profitable in a year before they could put up branches.

The BSP recently set new requirements on banks seeking to open branches to control the increasing number of banks in the country.

One requirement for banks applying to establish branches was to meet specified capital.

To be allowed to set up branches, universal and commercial banks should have a capital of P20 million; thrift and national cooperative banks, P5 million; and rural and cooperative banks, P2.5 million.

Banks applying for authority to establish branches are also required to have a capital adequacy ratio of 12 percent by the time the application is filed.

₱27-M Surigao port seen creating 200 jobs a year

By Abigail L. Ho

THE NEWLY constructed P27.72-million port in Placer, Surigao del Norte, is expected to indirectly create 200 jobs a year in the province and bring tourists to the area.

In a statement released yesterday, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza said while the new port and fish-landing site would not directly create jobs, it would indirectly generate at least 200 jobs for rural workers each year.

The Japan Bank for International Cooperation funded the project through a "concessional loan" with a 3-percent interest rate.

Mendoza pointed out that the port would produce "multiplier effects" on the economy by improving fishing for their livelihood and making port operations faster and more efficient.

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Throw Economic Saboteurs Behind Bars

War Against Corruption Scores First Victory:

GMA's Cancellation of Piatco Contract.

Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has recently DECLARED WAR AGAINST CORRUPTION. That declaration sounds the death knell of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco) Contract—an agreement CONCEIVED IN CORRUPTION.

Earlier, the President declared the contract with Piatco NULL AND VOID.

That should have been enough to stop all debates and then let the Philippine Government find the most effective and equitable way to operate the NAIA Terminal 3 with Fraport. But now, Piatco continues to confuse our people—raise rehashed issues, shift positions, throw in new legal tricks—with one apparent objective: misrepresent the truth.

The Government is expected to pursue the higher interest of our country and people, and consistent with our policies, to continue providing a favorable investment climate in the Philippines.

In fact, the Piatco Contract suffers from a fatal flaw from the beginning. It was meant to make money at the expense of government. The Terminal 3 project only served to be the vehicle by which the local partners of Piatco can use the Government, in making money from its foreign partners, and making more money from the traveling public. Then, if their conspiracy is exposed, blame Government for reneging on what they call a binding and legal agreement!

In the interest of the public, we offer our countrymen these easy-to-understand answers to questions on the issue.

The Big Idea: A World Class Air Terminal

Question
How did the idea to construct a world class Air Passenger Terminal come about?

Answer
In 1993, six of the country's leading taipans came up with an unsolicited offer to construct NAIA Terminal 3 under a build-operate-transfer (BOT) arrangement. The taipans are: John Gokongwei, Andrew Gotianum, Henry Sy, Lucio Tan, George Ty, and Alfonso Yuchengco.

They organized the Asia's Emerging Dragon Corporation (AEDC) to undertake the project under the following terms:

- Personal guarantee of the six taipans for funding
- Taipan commitment to initially invest P250 million each
- No cost to Philippine government
- No government exposure to any financial risks
- No government guarantee to AEDC's obligations.

Question
How come they came together for the NAIA Terminal 3 Project?

Answer
Despite the dynamic of natural competition of their respective enterprises, the six taipans found a common ground in their desire to enable our country to become a tiger economy. They rightly thought that one project that will result in our economic take-off is a world-class infrastructure project that will match the modern airports in Asia and beyond.

Who Got the Project?

Question
Did AEDC get the project?

Answer
No. Surprisingly, a virtual unknown in the Filipino-Chinese business community with no financial capability, got the project. This individual, whose name does not even ring a bell, is Cheng Yong... the mastermind of the Liongson "*pay for favors*" contract.

Question
Was the award to Cheng Yong's company above board?

Answer
It was not.

To begin with, PairCargo (Cheng Yong's company) did not have the required capital of P2.7 billion for the project, and therefore did not pre-qualify as bidder.

Furthermore, the original Concession Agreement signed in favor of Piatco on July 12, 1997, was substantially different from the offer of AEDC, the draft concession agreement and the terms of the bid documents previously approved by NEDA.

PairCargo soon became Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco), after it partnered with Fraport of Germany.

An Agreement

Question
Did Piatco enter into contract with Government in good faith?

Answer
One can only conclude that, from the beginning, Piatco owners knew that the grant of the project to them was highly irregular. For this reason, an agreement was signed, together with the original Concession Agreement, stipulating that, should the award to Piatco be nullified by the court, government would pay a liquidated sum of P180 million in damages, in addition to all other costs.

Piatco Never Had the Funds

Question
Was this original Concession Agreement signed in July 12, 1997, ever implemented?

Answer
No! It was not implemented. Piatco had no money to start construction. It had to borrow money from foreign lenders. In turn, the foreign lenders insisted on fundamental changes in the Concession Agreement, including some form of guarantee to secure Piatco's obligations.

Piatco's Style: Borrow Money, Let Gov't Worry

Question
Why was the original agreement substantially changed beyond recognition?

Answer
Since Piatco desperately needed to borrow money which it did not intend to pay from its own pocket, it connived with government officials to have. Government guarantee Piatco's debts and subordinate Government's interest to that of senior lenders.

Piatco also conspired with public officials to substantially amend the concession agreement by introducing highly onerous and grossly disadvantageous provisions in a new agreement signed on November 26, 1998, called the Amended and Restated Concession Agreement (ARCA).

Question
Can Piatco validly introduce substantial amendments to the original contract?

Answer
Under the BOT law, no substantial change can be made on a contract that has already been awarded, without obtaining again the prior approval of NEDA.

Piatco and its lawyers knew this fully well but, in spite of this, they introduced a provision in ARCA which places Government in breach of contract and liable for at least P30 billion "**if this agreement or any material provision hereof is declared illegal or unenforceable**" by any court of law.

One Wrong Led to a Greater Wrong

Question
If the Piatco Contract is void from the beginning, why didn't Government reject it early enough?

Answer
Piatco, together with the other government officials, conspired to lay out an elaborate plan to give an illusion that the contract is good for the country. Initially, Piatco presented a seemingly generous offer. But the moment it won the award, it surreptitiously introduced a string of changes that substantially altered the terms of the original agreement—to the prejudice of Government.

Question
How come some government officials promoted and defended the contract with all their might?

Answer
That's how corruption prospers—when men in authority have something to gain or do nothing in the face of a grave wrong.

Wrongdoers' Lies, Rewards Exposed

Question
Former Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez went on record to say that the Piatco Contract is "the best deal the country every had." How can he be so bold to say that?

Answer
First of all, let's settle the issue: The Piatco Contract is the WORST DEAL – so lopsidedly in favor of Piatco and surely against Government's interest.

Former Presidential Adviser Gloria Tan-Climaco exposed Mr. Alvarez's lie! She cited at least 28 contract provisions that are illegal, highly onerous and grossly disadvantageous to the country and our people.

Question
What job did a certain Alfonso Liongson do to deserve being paid millions of pesos or hundreds of thousands in dollars?

Mr. Liongson, a drug salesman, was identified by Mr. Cheng Yong as Piatco's "public relations consultant". He was paid a mobilization fee of US$200,000 (or P10.67 million). He was also paid US$600,000 (P32 million) when he got approval from DOTC of certain material changes in ARCA. And then, he was being paid US $200,000 per month. As per record, he got paid a total of $4 million (or a whooping P213.4 million)—tax free!

Liongson was hired just so Piatco officials can keep the contract they don't deserve and buy the legitimacy they don't have.

Hiding the Evidence, Persecuting Witnesses

Question
Nasaan si Liongson?

Answer
Liongson went into hiding when the Senate sent him summons to appear before a Committee hearing. Actually, someone wants Liongson to disappear. It's the crudest way to hide the evidence. Piatco officials don't want him to talk.

Fortunately for the Filipino People, the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee chaired by Senator Joker Arroyo, after conducting an exhaustive inquiry into the Piatco Contract, established that: **"The hiring of Liongson to work out agreements betrayed Piatco's predilection for buying favors from Government, which must be condemned."**

Question
May mga nagtatago pa ba?

Answer
Yes. An engineer of Wintrack Builders, Inc., Vener Mendoza, suddenly disappeared after he signed an affidavit exposing the sweetheart deal of Wintrack and Piatco. Wintrack, owned by Pantaleon Alvarez, who was then a Congressman, bagged a P300 million contract from Piatco.

Another Engineer from Wintrack, Rey Libutan, gave more information about Piatco and Alvarez. Since then, he received death threats. He sought well-meaning quarters to give him protection – and is in hiding until he is called upon to testify.

Betraying Foreign Partners

Question
Do the Chengs have foreign partners?

Answer
Yes, the Cheng Family has Fraport of Germany as a foreign partner. When you see the structures already built, credit the Germans who have the expertise, not the Chengs. Fraport also poured most of Piatco's capital and the funds for construction, running into at least US$450 million. The Chengs shelled out token money of US$16 million, mostly borrowed from Fraport, but they control Piatco.

Question
How come the Germans want out of the Piatco?

Answer
Actually, Fraport officials want to get out of its partnership with the Chengs. They are still interested to jointly run the Terminal with local partners they can trust and respect.

Fraport has discovered—to its extreme disappointment—that the Chengs have been collecting commissions from suppliers to the project. And those commissions came from Fraport capital infusions and advances. The Chengs have also been collecting enormous sums from would-be tenants of Terminal 3, keeping the money for themselves. When you betray the trust of your partner, what are you?

Presidential Action Sufficient to Stop a Graft-Ridden Contract

Question
Can the President stop the implementation of the Contract, even while it is being reviewed by the Supreme Court?

Answer
It is well within the power of the President of the Philippines to nullify the Piatco contract—and then act to stop its implementation. The Chief Executive need not wait for a judicial declaration that the contract is null and void before it can move toward righting a wrong, toward upholding the greater interest of our people.

The Executive Department is mandated to implement our laws and enforce government rules. The Piatco Contract is so graft-ridden. The Piatco affair is so defiled by cases of corruption. And Piatco officials and their willing allies have been caught lying and duping the government. The President had no choice but to promptly act after being told of the facts. To do otherwise would be shirking presidential responsibility.

Conceived in Corruption

Question
Did the Piatco Contract have a valid and legal purpose?

Answer
No.

The object of the agreement was scandalously illegal and immoral: **It was not for the purpose of building a world class international passenger terminal, but rather, to make billions of pesos at the expense of Government.** This rendered the contract invalid and void from the beginning.
The Contract proceeds from the premise that, if anything in such a contract cannot be enforced or would be struck down as illegal, the Government would be subjected to liabilities running to billions of pesos? This is what Piatco unabashedly demands! So, how can you re-negotiate a contract with Piatco?

Will you negotiate with partners whose hands are not clean? The contract was conceived in corruption, it cannot at all be saved.

Question
Is ARCA valid?

Answer
Listen to the well-considered opinion of the Acting Secretary of Justice and the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee on the issue:

"The 1997 CA (concession agreement) is void because it contains material deviations from the Bid document and the Draft Concession Agreement (DCA)... It follows that the ARCA and the Supplements are void because the obligations that they intend to modify are invalid."

The Senate Blue Ribbon Committee, composed of Senators crossing party lines, also concluded in its 69-page Report that the Piatco Contract is null and void from the start. It declares that:

"The Concession Agreement
because it... substantially devi
the Bid Documents and contra

Build-Operate-and-Transfer Law...Being a void contract... it cannot be validly amended. Thus the Amended and Restated Concession Agreement (ARCA) is likewise void... The three Supplements to ARCA are even worse...they contain prejudicial amendments. They are void for lack of ICC (Investment Coordination Council of NEDA) approval."

Question
Why was Piatco stopped?

Answer
To paraphrase a popular saying, Piatco was a disaster waiting to happen in our midst! If Piatco was not stopped, we would have faced the following dire consequences:

- ☐ The safety of our people compromised and the traveling public would have been gravely compromised
- ☐ Tens of thousands of families would have lost their means of livelihood
- ☐ Air passengers would have been suffering under the brunt of increased travel costs, including paying doubling of terminal fees, and
- ☐ Over 80 million of our countrymen—our children and our children's children—already burdened by economic hardships would have been made to pay for Piatco's debts now amounting to P30 billion!

The Piatco Contract
is not only illegal.
It is not only immoral.
It is wholesale corruption,
tantamount to economic sabotage.

WHAT DID GMA DO WITH THIS EVIL AMBITION?

SHE DEALT IT A FATAL BLOW!

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The Coordinating Council for Private Sector Participation (CCPSP) intends to engage the services of local and/or US consulting firms to conduct the Technical Study and prepare Tender Documents for the proposed MWSS 300 MLD Treated Bulk Water Supply Project to be implemented under the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Law.

Interested firms are invited to submit three (3) copies of their expression of interest and details of their capabilities and related experience by forwarding their names and addresses properly identified as **"LETTER OF INTENT FOR CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE MWSS 300 MLD TREATED BULK WATER SUPPLY PROJECT UNDER THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FACILITY (PDF)"** to the following address not later than **February 5, 2003**, 5 pm. Late submission will not be accepted.

CHAIRPERSON
Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
Coordinating Council for Private Sector Participation
6/F EDPC Bldg., Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
A. Mabini St., Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos.: 521-4262; 521-9287 • Fax: 525-4416

Consultant's Eligibility Forms and additional information may be obtained at the above address or at **http://ccpsp.org**

(Sgd.) **NOEL ELI B. KINTANAR**
Executive Director

(PDI--Jan. 16 & 23, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

INVITATION TO BID

The Supreme Court invites interested concessionaires to submit quotations/proposals for the operation of Canteen located at the Multi-Purpose Building of the New Supreme Court Compound, Padre Faura Street, Manila, that will provide canteen services to more or less 2,500 employees.

Interested concessionaires may obtain the necessary pre-qualification requirements from the Secretariat, Committee on Bids, 4th Floor Centennial Bldg., Office of Administrative Services and must be personally submitted by the authorized representative at ***10:00 a.m. on January 29, 2003 at the 4th floor Multi-Purpose Hall Supreme Court.*** At the same time and date the pre-qualification shall be conducted. Bid documents, proposal forms and Terms and Conditions shall be issued to interested bidders by the COB upon payment of ***P500.00 pesos*** which is not refundable. ***The pre-bid conference shall be held on February 5, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. at the 4th Floor Multi-Purpose Building.***

Only bid of pre-qualified bidders who participated in the pre-bid conference will be accepted and opened at the time of the bidding ***on February 12, 2003 at 10:00 a.m. at the Multi-Purpose Hall, 4th Floor Annex Building, Supreme Court,*** to be witnessed by the bidders or their representatives.

The Supreme Court reserves the right to reject any or all quotations, and/or proposals, waive any defect of informality therein, accept any bid/s or offer/s which it may consider to be advantageous and beneficial to the government.

January 14, 2003.

(Sgd.) **JOSE P. PEREZ**
Chairman
Committee on Bids

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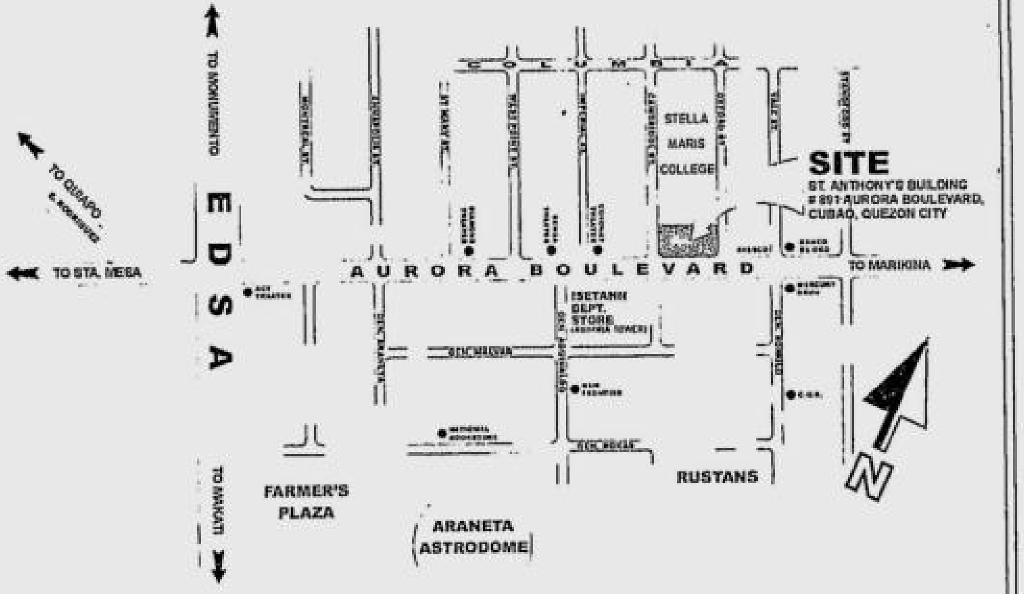

OBITUARIES

DR. JESUS B. LAVA

(UP COLLEGE OF MEDICINE CLASS 1938)

A NATIONALIST AND A REVOLUTIONARY
FORMER MEMBER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (1946)
FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL, PARTIDO KOMUNISTA NG PILIPINAS
CHAIRMAN, HUKVETS FOUNDATION FOR NATIONALISM AND DEMOCRACY, INC.
FOUNDER, PEOPLE'S PATRIOTIC MOVEMENT

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on January 21, 2003 at the age of 88.

His wife **Anita Mayang** (†); children **Baby & Gener Cedilla, Jess Jr. & Julie Morales**; grandchildren **Ningning & Mags Custodio, Jingle & Dolly Cedilla, Poms,** and **Chichi Cedilla, Tweet & John Callao, Jaja, Jesterd** and **Jill Lava**; great grandchildren **Honey Custodio, Johnbo, Jinjin** and **Trina Cedilla.**

His present wife **Librada Ayala**; children **Ting & Beth Mariano;** and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City until January 25, 2003.

Cremation will be at 8:00 a.m. on January 26, 2003. Thereafter, a one-day vigil in memory of him will be held at the Bulwagan ng Kagitingan at the family orchard in Brgy. Tibig, Bulacan, Bulacan. Interment will be on January 27, 2003 at the Bulacan Catholic Cemetery after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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Dra. Gracia Cuenca Mateo

*Joined her Creator on January 19, 2003
at the age of 91.*

Her loving sisters **CORAZON & AURORA**; brother **VICENTE**; nephews and nieces, grandchildren and great grandchildren; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Faith Chapel at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on January 25, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

✝

Decimo Aniversario

Señor Don Pacifico Cruz Garcia

Fallecio en Malate el dia 23 de Enero de 1993
A los 89 años de edad.

DEP
(Descanse en Paz)

Su esposa Sra. Doña Salvadora Garcia y Garcia, sus hijos e hijas, Justo, Teresita, Arturo, Angeles, Gloria, Isabelo, Rene, Albert, Edward, sus hijos politicos, hijas politicas, nietos, nietas, bisnietos y demas familia ruega una oracion por su alma.

Agradeciendo por esto medio, ànte la imposibilidad de hacerlo personalmente, las muestras de condolencias recibidas durante estos años.

La misa de aniversario se celebrara en la eiglesia de Malate a las 8:00 dela mañana 23 de Enero 2003. Sera aplicada por el eterno descanso de su alma.

✝

DANDO LAS GRACIAS

Fallecio en Sydney-Australia
el dia 1 de Diciembre de 2002, A los 94 años de edad.

Habiendo recibidos los Santos Sacramentos, sus hijos e hijas, hijos e hijas politicas, nietos, nietas, bisnietos, hermana y demas familia de

Sra. Doña Salvadora Garcia y Garcia

QEPD
(Que En Paz Descanse)

Agradecen los testimonios de pesame recibidos, ase como la asistencia a los actos piadosos celebrados en sufragio de su alma.

Our loving and merciful Father has called

RICARDO MAGTIBAY VELASQUEZ

to the fullness of life

His wife Rizalina;
sisters Lourdes with Ruben Mendoza, Sr. Ma. Aida, OSB, and Celia with Nelo Edillon; nieces, nephews, grandchildren: GJ, Grace, Josmer, and Ellen & Elmer, and other relatives & friends request the readers to pray for him and all those who have gone home.

He will be reunited with his parents Jose and Teresa.

His remains will lie in state at the St. Scholastica's Chapel, Leon Guinto St., Malate, Manila on Thursday p.m., 23 January 2003.

After Holy Mass at the St. Scholastica's Chapel, 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, 25 January 2003 interment will take place at the Mandaluyong Catholic Cemetery.

...

*"I am the resurection; whoever believes in me, though he dies, shall live forever"
John 11:25*

EDGARDO "ADO" H. CELESTE

Joined his Creator on January 19, 2003 at the age of 59.

His wife **Jocelyn nee Dacio**, mother-in-law **Julia Dacio**, mother **Ines Celeste**, sisters **Estrella** and **Bernadette**, brothers **Aristeo** and **Juan**, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

There will be an 8:30 a.m. Mass on January 26, 2003 at the Garden of Memories, Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina.

Interment immediately follows.

Lino Elauria Habacon

*passed away from his earthly life to Everlasting Peace
on January 20, 2003 at the age of 92.*

His bereaved family members: **Conching**, **Evelina H. Aguilar**, **Dory** and **Orland Salgado**, **Lina** and **Rene Datu**, **Nida** and **Robert de Guia**; **Jovita**, **Romulo** and **Baby Domingo Habacon**, **Obdulia** and **Frank Mandap**, **Inocencio Habacon**, **Jose** and **Severa Arellano**, **Pacifico** and **Esperanza Arellano**, **Rosita** and **Felicitos Mule**, **Fernando** and **Ethelsita Arellano**, and **Nora A. Marquez**, his grandchildren, great grandchildren, nephews, nieces and other relatives request for your prayers for his eternal rest.

His body lies in state at the family gazebo in St. Peter St. Paul Subdivision, Lingga, Calamba City. Funeral service and Mass will be held on Sunday, January 26, 2003 at 1:00 p.m. at the St. Peter St. Paul Parish Church very near the family gazebo. Interment will follow at the Habacon Family Mausoleum in Calamba Catholic Cemetery.

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

In Loving Memory of

Justice PORFIRIO V. SISON

September 6, 1918 - January 20, 2003

Court of Appeals Justice / Acting Governor, Vice Governor, Board Member of Pangasinan / Founder - Dean, University of Pangasinan / Dean, Manila Law College / Colombo Plan Staff College / Philconsa Vice Chairman / Chamber of International Trade EVP / 1995 Most Distinguished Law Alumnus-University of the Philippines / Chair, International Directorate, Asean Law Schools Association / Chair, Philippine Council of Law Deans / Chair, Philippine Retired Justices of the Court of Appeals Association / IBP, American Bar, & National Press Club / Founder, President, Boy Scouts of the Philippines-Pangasinan Council / President, United Way International / Governor, Philippine National Red Cross.

Beloved husband to **Former Pangasinan Governor Nancy Q. Sison**;

Loving father of **Tony & Penny**, **Ado & Mita Duque**, **Mory**, **Bobby & Marile**, **Vic & Girlie Roxas**, **Raul & Mari Garcia**, **Blitz & Bambi Torre**;

"Papa Boss" to 29 grandchildren: **Pia, Ton, Toots (Porfirio) & Bing, Butch & Meggy, Patty & Laurence, & Peach; Kat, Kristin, Marvin (Porfirio), Marco, Mikey & Kim; Niki (Porfirio), Bea & Enzo; Paolo & Pauline, Robi (Porfirio) & Angeli, & Miguel (†); Vic-Vic (Porfirio), Vinch, Jon, Kats & Rio (Porfirio); Peevee (Porfirio) & Trina; Tracy, PB & Peter**; and 9 great grandchildren: **Carlos, Sofi, Isabelle & Migoy; Giulio, Emilio, Marek, Enzo & Ruiz.**

His remains lie at the Premier Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe. It will be transferred to the Court of Appeals on Thursday, January 23, 2003 at 9:00 a.m. Funeral services will be held on Sunday, January 26, 2003 at 10:00 a.m. at the Lingayen Cathedral, Lingayen, Pangasinan.

*In lieu of flowers, donations to the Justice Porfirio V. Sison Foundation
will be appreciated.*

JUDGE TEODORO L. HERNANDO, SR.

Of Solana and Tuguegarao City, Cagayan

Died peacefully in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 20th of January, 2003, at the age of 76.

His family wishes to announce his interment on Saturday, January 25, 2003 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina, after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at Chapel D, North Wing Bldg., La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

"Behold my servant whom I have chosen my beloved in whom I delight".
Matthew 12:18

NOTICE OF CHANGE IN INTERMENT

The interment of
CLEOFE CONSUNJI vda. de HIZON
will now be after the 9:00 a.m. Mass
on Saturday, January 25, 2003
at the San Fernando Metropolitan Cathedral.
She will be laid to rest
at the Good Shepherd Memorial Park,
Dolores, San Fernando, Pampanga.

"In Christ all shall be made alive..." Corinthians 15:22

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MESSAGE OF THANKS
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Ford awards 8 environmental, conservation projects

By Aida Sevilla Mendoza

A FEW days after the kick-off of Ford Motor Company's global centennial celebrations last week, Ford Group Philippines announced the recipients of the 2003 Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants Program.

This year, Ford divided a total of P3 million among various projects in the areas of natural environment, conservation engineering, heritage and child and youth.

Commitment

Ford Group Philippines president Henry Co said the Ford Environment and Environmental Grants Program shows the company's support for efforts that conserve and preserve the environment and reflects the company's thrust toward environmental stewardship. "The awarding of the grants is Ford's commitment to the countries where we operate and is our way of giving back to the community for all the support they have given our company," Co stressed.

The program, now on its third year in Southeast Asia, is patterned after the 17-year-old Henry Ford Conservation Awards, in which 15,000 projects involving 110,000 people have participated.

Grantees

Of the grantees, the Center for Renewable Resources and Energy Efficiency's "Mangrove-Friendly, Solar-Powered Mudcrab Culturing Project" received the biggest funding of P1 million because of the project's multifaceted benefits in environmental protection, garbage recycling, conservation engineering and community development.

"Project Learning Tree," a child and youth project of the Center for Environment Awareness and Education, (CEAE) was the first project to receive a Ford grant two years in a row. Co said the decision to award the CEAE more funding in the amount of P300,000 is to ensure that the project's effort and impact are sustained.

In the natural environment category, the winners are the Maguindanaoan Development Foundation's "Advocacy for the Conservation and Management of Ligawasan Marsh toward Sustainable Development" (P545,000); the Rotary Club of Puerto Princesa's "Mooring Buoy Marker Project to Save Sea Corals" (P192,660); and Isidora Olazo's "Biological Control of Phytophthora Disease and Pests of Durian in Mindanao" (P200,000).

There are two winners in the heritage conservation category: Domingo Paguirigan's "Documentation and Preservation of the Cabagan Ybanag Ethnic Songs" (P250,000) and Silvestre Maslang's "The Ferangao of Cordillera: History and Culture" (175,000).

Aside from "Project Learning Tree," the other winner in the child and youth category is the Rotary Club of Makati-Kalayaan's "Integrated Farming in the City," which received a P300,000 grant from Ford.

In 2002, Ford awarded grants to nine projects in the Philippines but this year, the number was cut to eight to give each project a bigger piece of the total grant allocation.

The judges for the 2003 Ford Grants are University of the Philippines-Los Baños College of Forestry Dean Ramon Razal, ABS-CBN Foundation Bantay Kalikasan executive director Marlo Mendoza, Philippine Star agriculture and environment editor Roman Floresca, Environment and Natural Resources Assistant Secretary Raymond Mendoza, and Ford CEO Henry Co.

Honda's Takano, basketball player, has big game in mind

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

HERE'S a gem of a note from my "Insan" Taby Tabaniag, the country's dean of golf writers:

"To my 'Insan' Al Mendoza: Who has so much sweetness as a person it even permeates into his blood system."

The note is a gem because it accompanied a box of ABS bitter pills and a box of tea bags of the same brand. Taby, the "youthful" 83-year-old golf columnist of the Manila Standard, takes the ABS capsule every day and sips the tea every afternoon.

* * *

I do that, too, since both have been tested to put one's blood sugar and uric acid under normal levels. My mother had diabetes, and it's a pity ABS came along after my mother had died. I offered Mass to her on Jan. 21, the day she would have turned 83.

In a bit of nostalgia, Taby it was who won a Mitsubishi Lancer in a raffle some time ago at Southwoods. But known as a man who prefers no other vehicle than the Toyota Tamaraw, Taby sold his Lancer to Grappa's owner Bert Bravo of Caffe Appassionato fame.

"I have but small pleasures in life," said Taby then. "It's enough that I have a Tamaraw for a ride."

Here's to you, "Insan."

* * *

Mitsunari Takano, the tall, basketball-crazy president of Honda Cars Phils. Inc., has this grandiose plan to produce a car model that should give the opposition a run for their money. He targets a vehicle that is "generically Asean"—a completely built-up unit (CBU) that would make the Philippines the vehicle's only manufacturer in the region.

I raise a glass to that.

"Among all Asean countries, the Philippines has the most important component in terms of producing quality vehicles," Takano said when I bumped into him a while back in a Makati joint. "I refer, of course, to your country's competent labor supply. This seems to have been overlooked for so long."

* * *

It was a night to remember. I had my glass of wine, courtesy of course of Arnel Doria and Tin Tin Reyes, against Takano-san's glass of cognac.

Citing that RP labor is "the cheapest but the best in quality," Takano said the Philippines can match up against Thailand "since Thailand cannot produce all the models that Honda" has on the drawing boards right now.

He said his plan should be in place "within two years."

* * *

To gun up his plan, Takano bared that Honda Cars has raised P1 billion to construct a manufacturing transmission plant in Sta. Rosa, Laguna. Minus a major hitch, it will be completed in October this year.

Do I see President Macapagal-Arroyo applauding?

Takano's vision comes on the heels of a recently signed CBA between the union and management of Honda, which should augur well for a harmonious coexistence for both.

* * *

Once Takano's Asean model is rolled out of the plant, it could be exported also to Europe, North America including the United States and the major Asian cities. He hopes to generate $70 million in revenues annually from this project.

"Its world-class quality is such that the new plant is geared toward producing 140,000 units a year from the usual 16,000," said Takano. "I see the recruitment of no less than 200 highly skilled Filipino technicians. And that's only for starters."

I guess that in no time, I won't just see GMA applauding. I wish to also see her hand Takano the Presidential Legion of Honor—whether or not she steps out of Malacañang next year.

Please raise your glass, Takano-san. *Kampai!*

* * *

The 2003 Isuzu Fuego 4x2 has a big come-on. The pickup has virtually the power of a 4x4, not to mention an almost identical version of the new features of the 4x4. Not only that. It is supposed to be a real gas miser, just like practically all Isuzu models. As I keep saying, Isuzu is unbeatable when it comes to fuel efficiency. It was Isuzu that invented the engine suited to diesel fuel, remember?

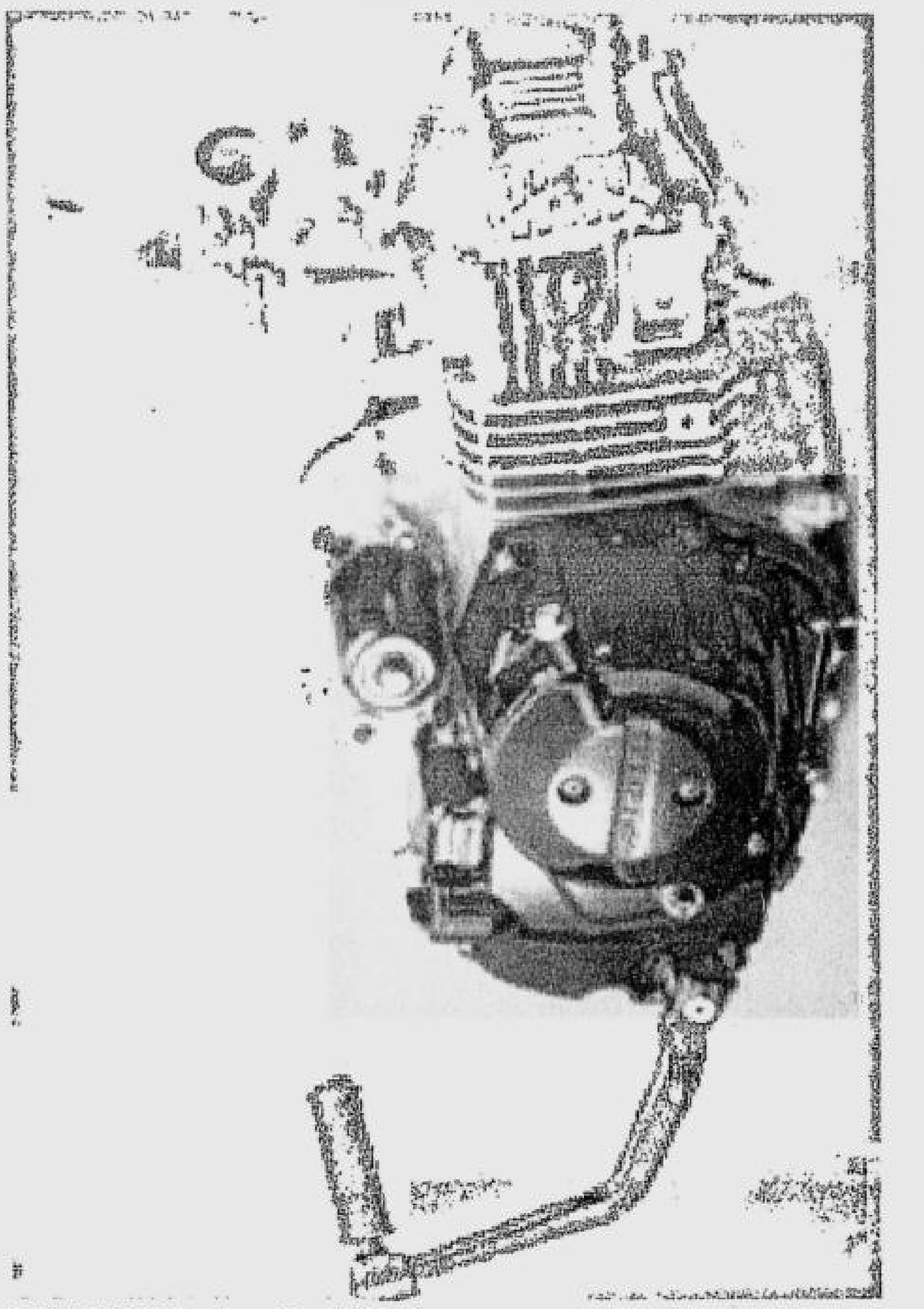
The new, rear-wheel-drive Fuego is now powered by a robust 2.8-liter high-charge turbo-diesel engine. Boasting of a maximum output of 100 ps at 3,800 rpm, Isuzu's new motor is available on the high-end (LS) variant of the Fuego 4x2. Just last September, Isuzu's vaunted direct-injection diesel technology registered a 33.19 km/liter fuel consumption!

It's priced at either P649,000 or P789,000, depending on color. The 4x4 M/T (manual transmission) comes at P999,000 and the A/T (automatic transmission) at P1,034,000. Now for the 4x4 M/T colored alpine white, spruce green, chainti red, ebony black and satin silver, it's pegged at P879,000.

I say that's a bargain.

* * *

QUOTE ME. When trying to buy parts for your vehicle, don't be a fool. Most of the time if not all the time, "Made in Taiwan" and "original" are one and the same. Rely on your "casa" or the official service centers.



THE 4-STROKE engine of Suzuki Smash

New Suzuki motorcycle carries advanced 4-stroke engine

SUZUKI Philippines Inc. recently launched the new Suzuki Smash, a four-stroke underbone motorcycle with kick and electric start features offering superior styling, comfort and performance designed to meet the needs and expectations of today's riders.

With a four-stroke engine that gives lower noise and vibration, good fuel economy, low emission and smooth power delivery, the Smash not only gives superior riding performance but practicality as well.

The engine's displacement of 110 cc delivers plenty of power and its large air cleaner of 2.8 liters contributes to combustion ease by allowing the engine to breathe smoothly.

Its VM17 carburetor mixes air and fuel efficiency allowing smooth acceleration and its lightweight aluminum-alloy cylinder minimizes the engine's total weight for good maneuverability and fuel economy. The aluminum-alloy cylinder also has better heat transfer, contributing to a more efficient engine cooling and combustion.

The Smash is available in celebration red and grayish blue silver for the deluxe model, and in crystal black and celebration red for the standard model.

GM starts new year with gift giving

THERE are countless ways to start the new year right. One of them is taking part in a worthwhile endeavor and sharing one's prosperity.

In keeping with this spirit of goodwill, General Motors Automobiles Philippines, the local subsidiary of the world's No. 1 car manufacturer, is one with the community in helping raise funds for Montessori de Oro.

Located in Cagayan de Oro, Montessori de Oro started as a preparatory school in 1980 before offering its educational programs to high school students.

To maintain its quality education for the benefit of its students, the school embarked on a fund-raising campaign called "Your Future, Our Pride" through the sale of Norma Belleza's plate artwork.

GMPH supports this endeavor by buying most of the 1,500-piece stock and gives them as gifts to its loyal customers for every purchase of any GM car starting last December.

Said GMPH sales director Toti Zara: "This project is two-pronged. We are not only ensuring the educational future of Montessori de Oro students, but we are also supporting up-and-coming artists like Norma Belleza, who embodies the simplicity of Filipino life through her artworks."

With its determined and colorful brushstrokes, Belleza's plates will truly bring warmth to the Filipino home. The "Ilaw ng Tahanan" 2002 plates will be offered for free and until stocks last at any GM AutoWorld outlets in Makati, Quezon Avenue, Shaw Boulevard, Cebu and Pampanga.

RPN

AUTO EXTREME
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Catch AUTO EXTREME every Saturday, 4 PM on RPN 9 and log on to www.autoextreme.tv

Each week, a viewer's question related to cars and motoring gets answered on Auto Extreme. You can get a hard copy every Thursday in the Motoring section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Is it advisable to use coolants?
—*Wesly Aspera of Dingle, Iloilo*

ABSOLUTELY. Coolants keep your engine cool by increasing the boiling point of water. By doing that, they help keep the engine temperature within limits. It isn't meant to stop the engine from heating up entirely because an efficient cooling system allows the engine temperature to rise as soon as possible and then maintain the right temperature levels.

In addition to protecting your engine from overheating, the coolant in the radiator also protects the engine from rust or corrosion in the water jackets and the radiator. The blocking of engine passages can also be curbed by the use of a coolant. Furthermore, high-quality coolants protect and lubricate the radiator.

For best results, mix coolant with distilled water and not just water from your faucet. That's because minerals in your tap water could build up as sediment in your radiator. Also make sure you have the right water and coolant ratio for optimum heat transfer capability, overheating resistance and lubrication. So be sure to check the manufacturer's recommendations. You should also have your car's engine coolant flushed or changed every year or every 20,000 km whichever comes first.

To say goodbye to troubles caused by radiators and to keep your cool while driving, use the right level of coolant and maintain it regularly. By following these measures you will be extending the life of your car radiator. If you're tempted to scrimp, keep in mind that in the long run it will pay to change the engine coolant on a regular basis rather than spend on the replacement of the radiator or related accessories later on.

BMW Group sells 1.057 M vehicles

THE BMW Group ended the year 2002 with a new sales record: 1.057 million BMW and Mini vehicles were delivered to customers last year. This corresponds to an increase in sales of 17 percent (905,657 units the previous year).

Sales increase

Sales of the BMW brand rose to 913,000 units (880,677 units the previous year), the equivalent of nearly 4 percent.

The Mini brand was also strong: 144,000 vehicles were sold in 2002. It was launched in the previous year, when sales reached 24,980 units.

BMW motorcycles achieved record sales for the 10th time in a row: sales rose by 9 percent to over 92,000 units (84,713 units the previous year). This was announced by Dr. Helmut Panke, chair of the board of management of BMW AG, in Detroit at the North American International Auto Show (Naias).

Dr. Panke described the worldwide launch of the new BMW 7 series model range and the start of the BMW Z4 Roadster in the United States as major milestones in the past financial year.

In the first year after the model change of the 7 Series, over 60 percent more vehicles were sold than in the previous year (32,749 units).

Said Panke: "We are expecting the premium segments once again to develop better in 2003 than the mass segments. The BMW Group is in an excellent position to continue its dynamic development in the year 2003 too."

Product offensive

This year is one of the most important product years for the BMW Group. At the beginning of the year, the Rolls-Royce brand will be expanding the company's premium portfolio in the absolute top segment. This means that the BMW Group is represented in the premium sector with three brands for the first time.

The newly developed Rolls-Royce limousine is the curtain-raiser for the largest product offensive that the BMW Group has ever undertaken within a year.

Within the BMW brand, the new 5 Series will be launched. In addition, two completely new model series will be presented with the BMW X3 and the BMW 6 Series Coupé. These will be joined by three updated BMW 3 Series variants.

To supplement this, a diesel engine Mini will be launched in Europe in 2003.

Said Dr. Panke in Detroit: "With our clearly expanded product range, we intend to increase sales by 40 percent by the year 2008 to 1.4 million vehicles. We will be raising the BMW Group to a completely new level."

Get Mercedes-Benz C-Class through low payment plans

THE MERCEDES-BENZ C-Class, the modern incarnation of the famous "Baby Benz" 190 model, is now available through attractive and affordable payment schemes.

CATS Motors Inc., the leading dealer of Mercedes-Benz passenger cars in the Philippines, announced this week a new sales promotion offering a wide range of payment plans to choose from, in cooperation with Asia United Bank.

The best option on hand entails an unbelievably low down payment of only P380,000, or around 12 percent of the car's actual list price. For others who prefer a low monthly installment, another viable option involves paying only P36,421 a month.

Sporty and elegant

"The Mercedes-Benz C-Class is a compact, mid-range passenger car that is sporty, at the same time elegant and well equipped," said Rodolfo C. Estrera, CMI vice president for marketing and communications.

"Now, this world-class, highly-innovative, state-of-the-art dream car can be driven home today through CATS Motors' new customer-friendly payment options," Estrera added.

Luxury, safety features

Currently available is the C200 Kompressor, in both Elegance and Avantgarde variants, boasting of luxury and safety features such as sunroof, original MB stereo equipment with mobile phone hands-free system, Parktronic system, multifunction steering wheel, full leather upholstery, airbags, 5-speed automatic transmission with Tippshift, and Electronic Stability Program.

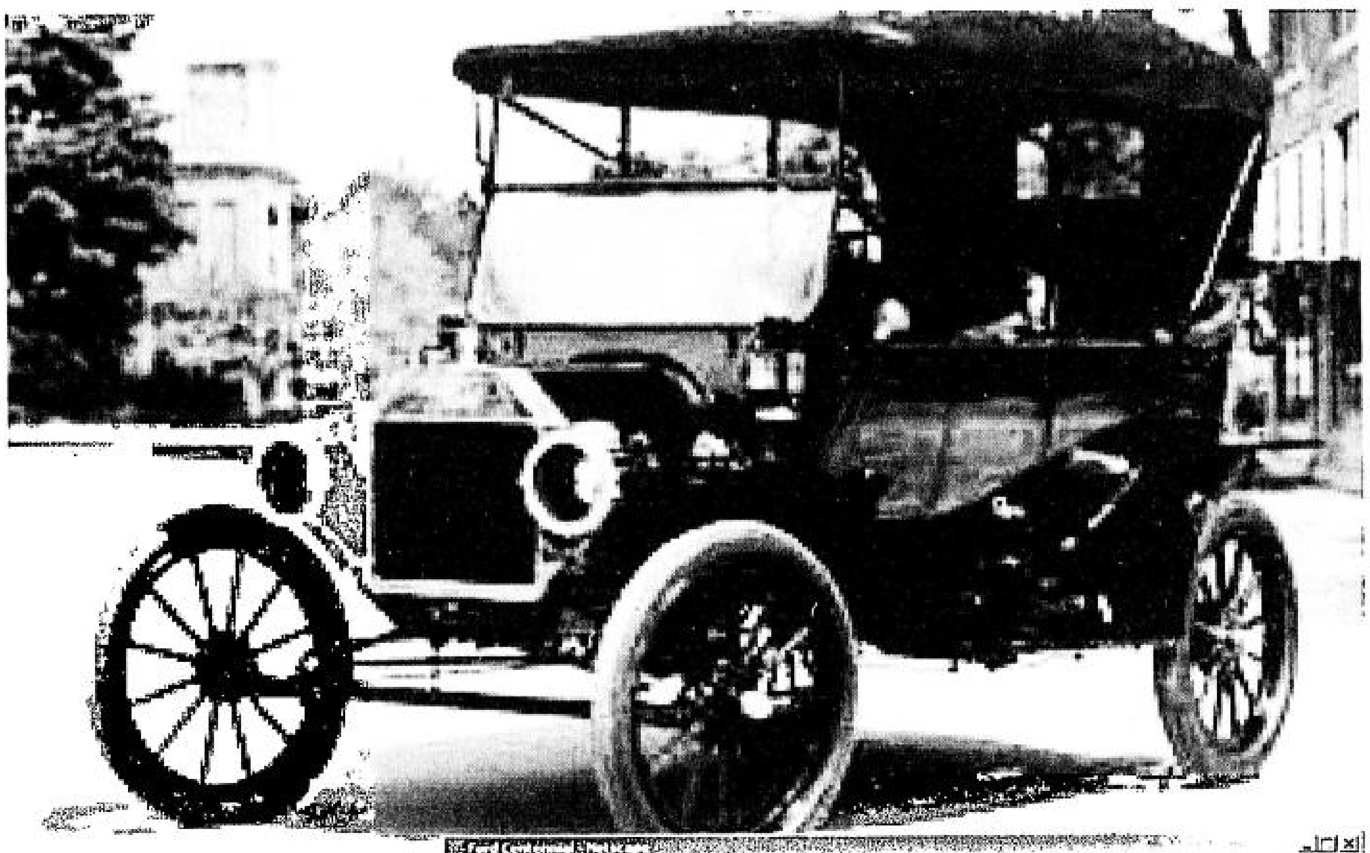
Interested buyers may call up CATS Motors at 723-5808, fax at 726-7741 or e-mail at mercedesbenz@cats.com.ph.

CMI showroom

Actual units are on display at the CMI showroom at 1008 Edsa, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila. The showroom is now open until 8 p.m. All purchases are subject to bank approval and supported by full factory warranty from Mercedes-Benz distributor Commercial Motors Corp.

Ford begins centennial countdown

By Charles E. Buban



FOR ITS centenary, Ford hand-built six 2003 Model T-100s, an exact replica of the 1914 Model T, the last model with the "antique" look that defined automobile designs of that era.

IT'S exactly 144 days before June 16, a date so significant for Ford that the people there are even counting every second (which is now about 12.44 million).

Well, you can't blame the Ford people for such penchant for countdowns. After all, the company will be commemorating a historic milestone.

Ford worldwide will be celebrating its 100th year—a feat so few automobile manufacturers in existence today can boast of.

"This is truly a significant year as we will be marking our centennial come June 16. Right now we are preparing numerous activities here in the Philippines as part of a worldwide celebration," said Ford Group Philippines president Henry Co in last week's announcement held in Makati City.

Founded in 1903

The Ford Motor Company was founded in 1903 by Henry Ford together with 11 other investors in Michigan, USA, proclaiming, "I will build a car for the great multitude."

He did so when he offered the Model T five years later and heralded the beginning of the Motor Age in the United States.

Ford also revolutionized manufacturing using innovative production techniques—constantly-moving assembly line, subdivision of labor and careful coordination of operations.

Since then the car as an automobile evolved from luxury item for the well-to-do to essential transportation for the ordinary man.

Second largest

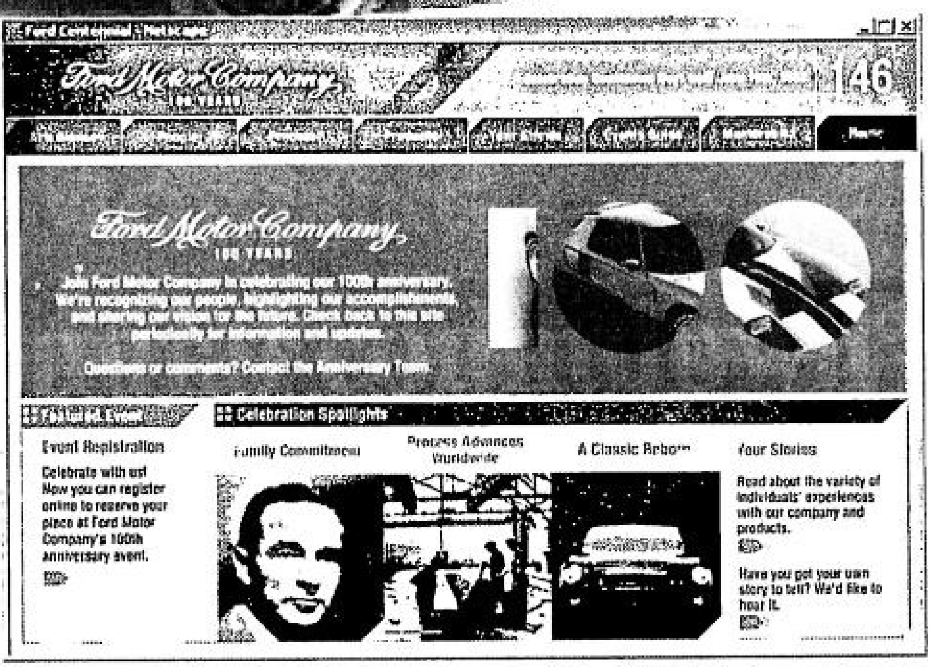
Today, Ford has grown to be the world's second largest automaker operating in more than 200 markets on six continents.

Here in the Philippines, the company made a comeback in 1998 after a 15-year hiatus and put up a P4.18-billion Laguna plant in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

The plant has a capacity of 25,000 vehicles per year and is capable of producing at least four different vehicle platforms.

It now exports completely built-up Lynx passenger cars to Thailand and assembles Ranger pickups. Completing the fleet, being distributed in the country are the Escape, Expedition, Explorer Sport Trac, Chateau Wagon, the F-150 pickup, and the luxurious Lincoln Town Car.

According to Co, this is but a part of the company's goal to reach 15 percent market share by 2005.



Ford Centennial - Netscape

Ford Motor Company 100 YEARS

Join Ford Motor Company in celebrating our 100th anniversary. We're recognizing our people, highlighting our accomplishments, and sharing our vision for the future. Check back to this site periodically for information and updates.

Questions or comments? Contact the Anniversary Team.

Celebration Spotlights

Event Registration

Celebrate with us! Now you can register online to reserve your place at Ford Motor Company's 100th anniversary event.

Family Commitment

Process Advances Worldwide

A Classic Reborn

Your Stories

Read about the variety of individuals' experiences with our company and products.

Have you got your own story to tell? We'd like to hear it.

THE LATEST information on Ford's 100th anniversary activities can be browsed at www.ford.com

Honda takes lucky buyers to Malaysian F1 Grand Prix

HONDA Cars Philippines Inc. together with its dealership network gives a zooming headstart this year.

For a limited time only, early year bonus awaits buyers of selected City and Civic variants as they get a host of savings and freebies. What's more, there is a chance to win an all-expense paid getaway trip to Malaysia to watch the hottest race in the world, the 2003 Malaysian F1 Grand Prix in March.

Taking home a Civic or a City has never been so exciting. Honda offers free 1-year comprehensive motorcar insurance. Buyers may also opt to avail of cash incentives in lieu of the free comprehensive, insurance package.

Variants included in the promo are the following:

- For the City
  - —1.3 GL
  - —1.3 LXi MT
  - —1.3 LXi AT
- For the Civic
  - —1.5 CE
  - —1.6 VTi MT
  - —1.6 VTi-S
  - —1.6 RS

What's more, selected premium car accessories are to be given away for free.

Now for the best part, Honda is giving anew its customers an added bonus, by providing the opportunity to witness and experience the pinnacle of motorsports: Formula One.

Buyers of promo variants are qualified to join the raffle bid to watch the Malaysian F1 Grand Prix in Sepang with a city tour around Kuala Lumpur to boot.

Two lucky winners, which will be drawn on Feb. 10, with a DTI representative, can bring one companion each to the F1 GP trip in Sepang.

Visit any of the 18 authorized Honda dealers nationwide and take home a City or a Civic of your choice. For more details, contact your nearest dealer or log on to www.hondaphil.com.

VOLVO S40

The entry-level...

From page B12

The S40 does not skimp on luxury features, either. In the silver green model I test-drove, elegant black leather provided comfortable seating while wood-effect inlays and the black leather-clad three-spoke steering wheel added to the sporty ambiance. The two large, centrally positioned instruments flanked by two smaller dials enabled me to easily monitor the information I needed.

The driver's seat is electrically adjustable and there are reading lamps for all passengers. A 10-disc CD changer mounted in the trunk and a tuner cassette with in-dash CD player are standard equipment. The only disappointment in the gorgeous black interior was the total absence of cupholders—not even one!

Sportiness enhanced

On the outside, the S40's sportiness is enhanced by a dynamic new grille with black egg crate pattern, black bezel headlamps with rings in front of the reflectors, color-keyed trim moldings and a chrome-plated opener for the luggage compartment. With its somewhat rounded sculpture, the S40 manages to escape Volvo's traditional boxy image but the design is still conservative.

The S40's safety equipment list is almost as long as that of its comfort and luxury features, for Volvo is the undisputed leader in automotive safety. The S40's safety features include six airbags, side-impact protection system (SIPS), improved inflatable curtain, whiplash protection system (WHIPS), anti-submarining on all seats, four-wheel disc brakes with ABS, Electronic Brake Distribution, Volvo Guard Alarm with immobilizer and Home-Safe Lighting, keyless entry, auto door unlock in crash situation, collapsible steering column, reinforced floor, passenger safety cage, protected fuel tank with secure connections and three-point inertia-reel safety belts on all seats.

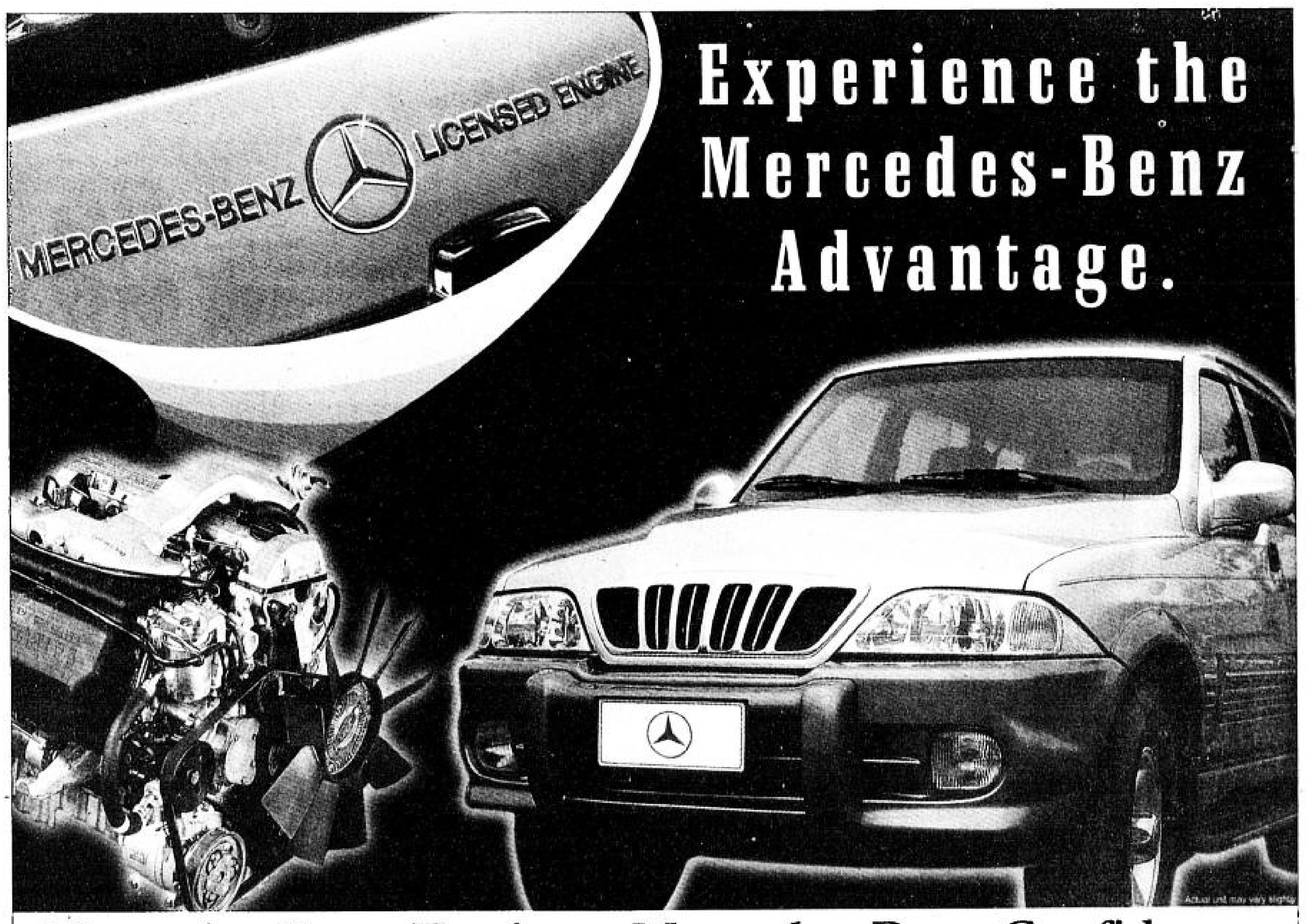
Bottom line: At P1,595,000, the S40 is a "buy" for first-time entrants to the luxury car market. If you want more power and have an extra P250,000 to spare, take a look at the 200-bhp S40 T4 Turbo. But that's another story which I hope to be writing sometime soon.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: A lot of money is tainted. It taint yours and it taint mine.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.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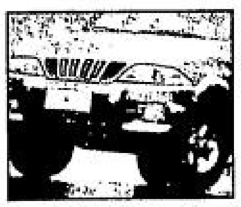
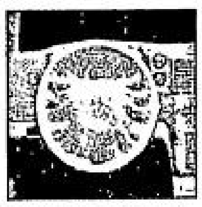
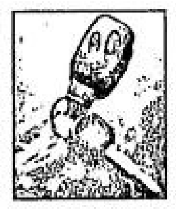

Anti-Lock Braking System

Ten passengers seating capacity


Leather-covered, adjustable steering wheel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MOTORING

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Strong AUV sales fueled by reclassified CR-V

By Tessa R. Salazar

SALES of Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) last year got an unexpected boost from buyers of the reclassified Honda CR-V.

Combined with the introduction of sleeker variants from other AUV manufacturers and strong second semester sales promotions, the 2002 AUV sales grew by an impressive 38 percent, according Truck Manufacturers Association president Elizabeth H. Lee.

"Aside from the usual AUVs patronized by motorists, one of the major factors is the contribution of the CR-V which already grabbed 19 percent of market share (7,195) considering it was just introduced in April," said Rico Mangabang, TMA marketing committee chair.

After the smoke cleared, though, the 2002 league leader in terms of AUV sales remained Toyota Motors Corp. Toyota sold 12,326 (32.91 percent). Mitsubishi Motors Corp. ended up second with 9,342 (24.95 percent). Isuzu Philippines tallied 8,293 (22.15 percent), Honda Cars Philippines 7,125 (19.03 percent), Pilipinas Hino 247 (0.66 percent), and Francisco Motors Corp. 71 (0.19 percent).

Commercial vehicle sales

Commercial vehicles comprise 75 percent of all industry sales. Aside from AUVs, other vehicles classified under commercial vehicles are vans, full wagon, compact wagon, pickups (4x2 and 4x4, compact, double cab and full-size), light trucks and trucks and buses. Strong performers in the pickup category were the Nissan Frontier and Mitsubishi Strada.

The TMA reported commercial vehicles posted a 23-percent growth in 2002 propelled by the 38-percent rise in AUV sales.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Sales of passenger cars, however, declined by 8 percent in 2002.

Sales decline

Lee noted that the shorter selling days caused by the holidays in December accounted for the 7.7 decline in total sales for the month of December.

Toyota led AUV sales for December (1,073 units) followed by Honda (930).

The light commercial vehicle segment grew 8 percent despite the poor sales performance of compact wagons. Vans posted a strong 44-percent growth, selling 8,187 units this year (compared to 5,556 in 2001).

Vans, in fact, are enjoying a surge of their own, as they grabbed a 34-percent share, followed by the ever-popular pickups with 30 percent for the LCV (light commercial vehicle) market. Toyota, again, dominated in the van segment with a 24-percent share, followed by Universal Motors Corp. (with its Nissan Urvan) with a 17-percent share. UMC's Nissan Frontier led all pickups, capturing a 32-percent share, followed by Ford (Ranger, Sportrac and F-150) with 19 percent.

Mitsubishi sold 598 units for December followed by UMC with 446 units. Mitsubishi (L-300 vans, pickups) topped the year, posting 4,861 units or a 20.17-percent market share, followed by UMC with 4,712 units and a 19.55-percent share.

In the light truck category, Ford's Expedition and Chateau Wagon topped yearend figures with 1,211 units. Its Expedition and Chateau Wagons sold 945 and 266, respectively. Isuzu's N-series light trucks came in second with 757 and a 28.86-percent market share.

Category 4

In category 4 (trucks and buses), Columbian Motors' Nissan Diesel and Man sold 48 units in December followed by Pilipinas Hino's trucks and buses which sold 25 units. Category 4 in 2002 was dominated by Columbian Motors and Pilipinas Hino, with the former selling 294 units for a 36.84-percent share and the latter with 271 units sold, for a 33.96-percent share.

All in all, TMA reported that the auto industry's 13-percent growth in 2002 relied on the strength of commercial vehicles.

Lee, in an interview two weeks ago, said this growth has been costly for most. The growth in sales, she said, has been due to the strong promotions campaigns, cash rebates and discounts, financing packages that were offered by most brands to make vehicles more attractive to buyers.

VOLVO S40

The entry-level Volvo

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

ALL auto manufacturers have entry-level, manual-transmission passenger car offerings priced to suit the budgets of people buying their first new car. Honda has the City Type Z 1.3 GL, Toyota the Corolla 1300 XL, Ford the 1.3 Lynx LSi, Mitsubishi the Lancer 1.3 GLX, Nissan the Sentra Exalta 1.5 DS, Chevrolet the 1.6-liter Cassia, Kia the 1.1-liter Pride and Opel the 1.6-liter Astra.

But when it comes to the luxury class, the entry-level pickings are narrowed down to automatic transmission cars costing more than one million and a half pesos, at the very least. Among the entry-level premium cars, the 2.0-liter Volvo S40 4-door sedan stands out for its low price (P1,595,000) compared to the 2.0-liter Mercedes-Benz C180 Classic (P2,450,000), the 1.8-liter Audi A4 (P1,794,000) and the 2.0-liter Jaguar X-Type (P1.9 million).

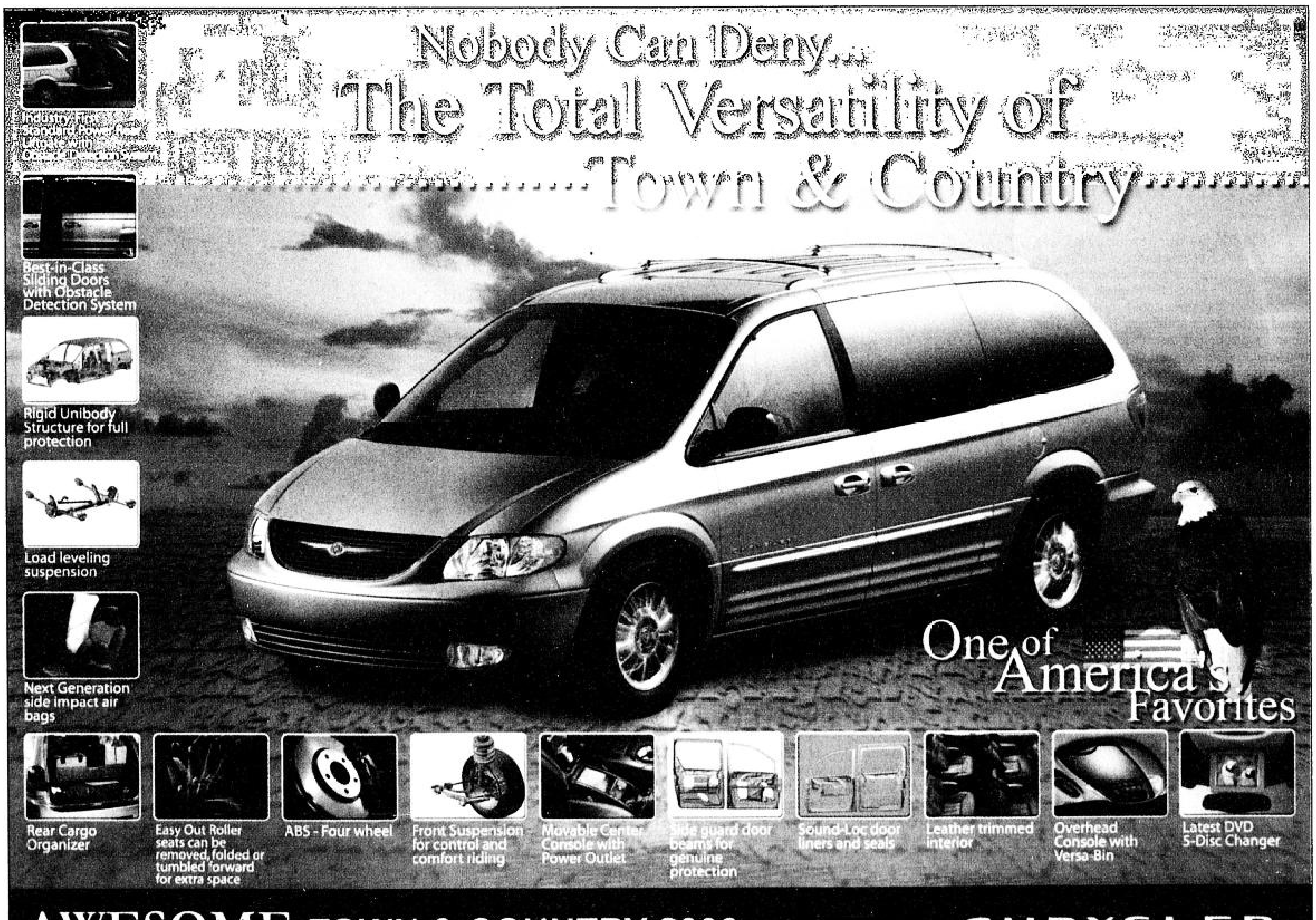
Sure, the BMW 316Li costs P20,000 less than the Volvo S40 at P1,575,000, but it packs 400 less horses with its 1.6-liter, 105-bhp engine. The 2.0-liter Volkswagen Bora has a P1,497,000 price tag, but do you consider VW a luxury marque? VW, the "People's Car" is more of a commoner like Opel, another German brand, since the premium badge in the VW Group is Audi.

Most impressive

The Volvo S40's low price compared to its competitors in the entry-level premium car category does not mean that it skimps on power, performance, safety and luxury features. The S40's transverse 4-cylinder 16-valve 2.0-liter engine, mated to a five-speed automatic tranny including overdrive, produces peak 136 brake horsepower at 5,800 rpm and 190 Nm/4,000 rpm max torque. Its top speed is listed at 200 kilometers per hour, which explains why, when I drove it at 160 km/h on the Skyway, it seemed eager to go even faster. But slowpokes on the Skyway and the short stretch prevented me from calling up the S40's power reserves to the max.

What impressed me most about the S40, aside from its superb stability and poise at exhilarating speeds, was its fuel thriftiness. The needle on the fuel meter hardly moved the four days I was driving it. Volvo attributes the low fuel consumption to optimized software in the engine control units. Dynamic Stability Assistance and anti-roll bars front and rear ensure crisp handling and excellent riding comfort.

THE ENTRY/B11



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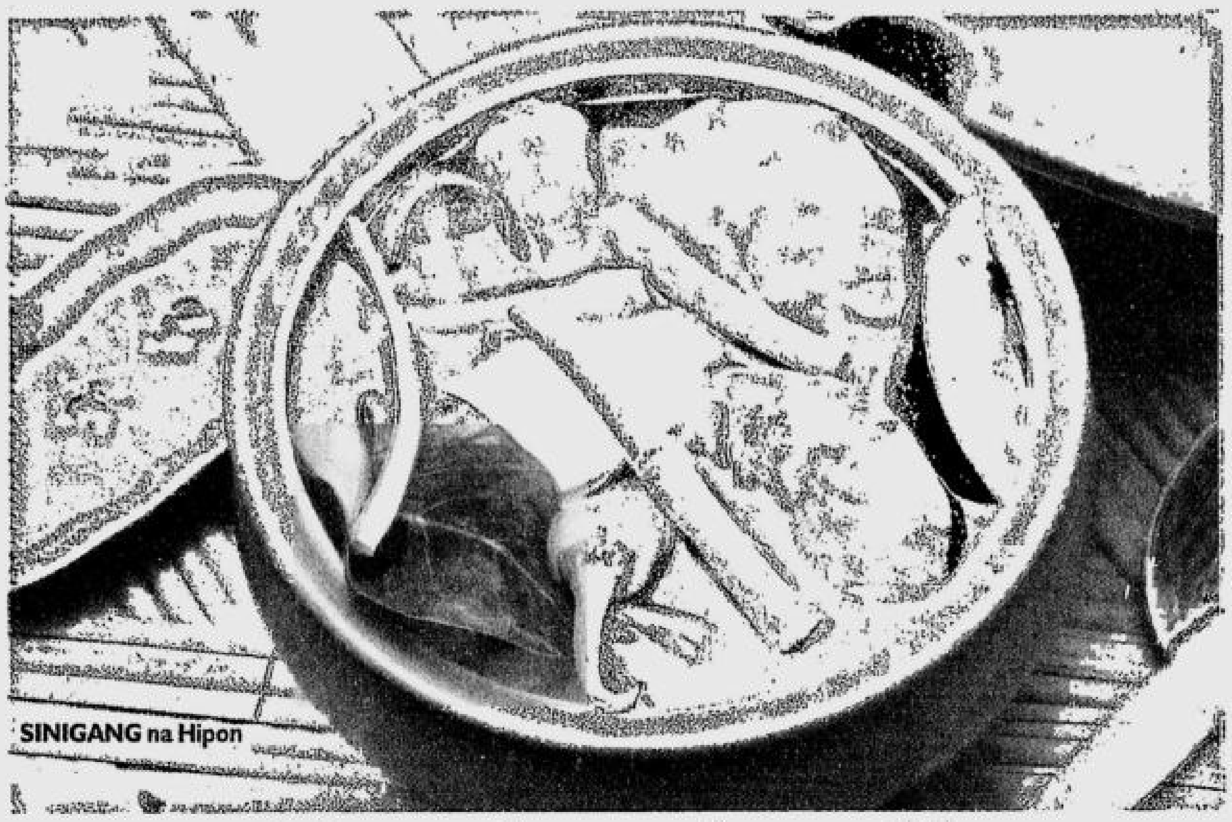
SINIGANG na Hipon

Sitio at the Podium serves good, old fashioned 'kare-kare,' 'sinigang' and 'inihaw' in classy surroundings

Unabashedly Pinoy

By Cathy Babao Guballa
Photos by Mandy Navasero

THERESA Reyes-Alvarez and cousin JG Santiago come from a long line of families that love to cook and eat. JG's dad is steak man Melo, famous for his Black Angus steaks that set the trend in steak places in the 1990s.

"Whenever our families would get together we would always look for good, traditional Filipino food—*kare-kare*, *sinigang*, *inihaw*. Those are the family staples when we have occasions to celebrate," Theresa says. "Nowadays there seems to be a spin even on food—fusion this and fusion that—there's hardly any place that serves honest-to-goodness, home-cooked Filipino food," she adds.

Sitio Filipino on the 5th level of Podium at the Ortigas Center has been packing in the lunchtime crowd in the two months that it has been in operation, much to Theresa and JG's delight.

"We have all the staples here. The food that you would normally have in a Filipino home during a party or even just a family dinner," Theresa explains.

Traditional fare

Traditional, home-cooked Filipino meals are served in modern ambiance (no *salakots* or Barong Tagalog-clad waiters here, folks); service is friendly and quick, with portions good enough to share among two to three people.

"We want Sitio to be a truly Filipino restaurant and so we spent at least three months looking for the regional dishes and tested them among family and friends until we found the perfect flavors and tastes," Theresa shares. Judging by the lunch crowd that afternoon, it is apparent that people in the Ortigas office area have found the place to satisfy their cravings for Pinoy food.

Diners are served in a modern setting. Ivan Acuna's huge modern canvasses line its walls accentuated by uniquely designed wall Capiz lamps. Dinner or lunch for two? Take one of the cozy seating areas by the wall and settle into soft, comfortable, light-colored leather chairs. Tree stumps topped with glass make for unique tables in this cozy corner. Larger groups or families can take any of the long dark wood tables that are placed in the center of the restaurant. Upside down umbrellas swathed in cheesecloth hang from the ceiling giving Sitio soft and warm lighting.

Lunch or dinner at Sitio ideally begins with an appetizer or a salad (Chicharong Bulaklak, P90; Crispy Pork Tadyang, P140; Ensaladang Talong, P35; Mangga't Bagoong, P45; Lumpiang Hubad, P85). For your main course, there's a wide variety that caters to various diets and budgets. For something spicy or rich, try the Bicol Express (P140) or Binagoong Baboy (P160). If fish is what you fancy, there's Crispy Fried Hito (P140), Smoked Tinapang Bangus Bonuan (P160), or Sinigang na Maya Maya sa Miso (P180). Our all-time favorites—Kare-Kare (P200) is perfect with Crispy Pata (P280). After your main

UNABASHEDLY/C4

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Resto promo offers 3 dishes for the price of 2

From page C4

Garden is located at 2/L, Glorietta 2, Makati (tel. 817-9066/67).

AT JADE Garden, its Hong Kong chefs have prepared a set menu of roasted meat combination, fish lips with sea cucumber soup, dried oysters with sea moss, steamed king fish, mutton in oriental sauce, peppercorn crabs, shrimps with glass noodles in hot pot, Yeung Chow fried rice and sliced tikoy, at P6,880 per set menu (for 12 people). It is inclusive with two boxes of *tikoy.* Peking Garden and Jade Garden sell the *tikoy* at P180/box, with one free box for every purchase of five boxes. Jade Garden is at Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center (tel. 892-4548).

HOLIDAY Inn Manila, with Jianguo Hotel Beijing, celebrates Chinese New Year with a food festival dubbed "Journey to Beijing," Jan. 27-Feb. 9 at the Pavilion Court. The two-week food festival also highlights a trade fair of various Chinese products, fortune telling and dragon dance presentation. Call 526-1212 local 2503.

TO CELEBRATE the advent of the Year of the Water Ram, Makati Shangri-La offers an array of special packages and feasts. On Feb. 1, 12:30 p.m., witness the spectacle of a Dragon and Lion Dance by members of the Philippine Ling Nam Athletic Association. Until Feb. 3, guests can choose from the regular round or the lucky fish-shaped *tikoy* varieties that come in sweet rice and yam flavors. Until Feb. 9, executive chef Alan Tsang of Shang Palace presents an a la carte menu. Call 840-0884 or 813-8888 local 7588/7799.

MANILA Midtown Hotel Vogue Coffeeshop links up the various culinary cultures of Italy's regions-from the braised beef and creamy risottos of Piedmont, the seafood and herd-inspired touches of Liguria, the pasta and pork delicacies of Emilia, to the Mediterranean vibe of Sicily-until Jan. 26. Call 526-7001 local 6554.

EDSA Shangri-La's Summer Palace offers traditional smoked meat in Cantonese dishes until Jan. 30. Choose from steamed chicken with two kinds of sausages, stewed pork belly with vegetables, braised lamb with bean curd, fried coffee spare ribs, smoked fish fillet with Chinese sausages, fried prawns with salted egg yolk, steamed glutinous rice with pork belly and black mushrooms. Taste the difference of Japanese oysters at Inaho Tei until Jan. 23. The Lobby Lounge serves "Evening Pica-Pica." Call 633-8888 local 2738 and 2739.

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Noodle House

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Mango wine receives best packaging award

DON Roberto's Mango Wine, the first mango wine in the world, was recently awarded with the Philstar Award by the Packaging Institute of the Philippines for its excellence in labeling and packaging given at the Philippines World Trade Center.

With an inspiration from the Holy Trinity, Roberto "Oby" Castañeda, with labeling and packaging magnate Henry Tiu, shaped his wine bottles like pyramids to constantly remind him that God is always guiding him. "My wine is 12.5 percent alcohol and 100 percent Spirit of the Lord," he said.

Made from the best mangoes of Central Luzon, Don Roberto's Mango Wine comes in two flavors: yellow mango with a sweet fruity taste and green mango for those who go for the wild taste of red wine.

Watch out for the launching of Don Roberto's Brewed Coffee Wine at the Philippine Food Expo 2003 on Jan. 29-Feb. 2 at the SM Megamall Megatrade Hall, and in the National Trade Fair 2003 on March 12-16. Call (046) 471-4046 or (0917) 836-5207.

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**Two adults must travel on the same package in order to avail of one Globe Handyphone Pre-paid Plus (Nokia 3530) Phone Kit with PhP 100 pre-loaded airtime (One Globe Handyphone per two traveling adults).

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*All packages come with economy class return tickets For Bangkok and Singapore package, Bangkok-Manila journey on Lufthansa. For USA package, Manila Hong Kong journey on Cebu Pacific. For Hong Kong and Singapore package, Hong Kong-Manila journey on Cebu Pacific. Packages are valid from 16 January to 31 March, 2003 departures from Manila Surcharge applies to departures between March 25 - 31, 2003 For travel to Australia, surcharge applies to departures between January 1 - 31, 2003 and March 16 - 31, 2003 All packages, except for the Bangkok package, are also valid for departures from Cebu and Davao. Surcharges apply to departures from Cebu and Davao for Australia, Europe, USA and South Africa packages Prices are per person and based on twin-share hotel accommodation. Single supplement surcharge applies. Discount applies to children below 12 years old. Price excludes taxes/fees and insurance surcharge. Other conditions apply *** Singapore Visitor Kit available until February 15, 2003. ****Hong Bao available until March 15, 2003

Globe Handyphone kits should be claimed on or before May 31, 2003. Unclaimed Globe Handyphone Prepaid Plus phone kits after said date shall be forfeited. To claim, passenger must present their gift voucher with valid ID and original ticket duly stamped by SIA Tours Desk to the following offices Manila - Globe Telecom (7392388 / 7302491), Cebu - Globe Telecom (032 - 4129903), Davao - Globe Telecom (082 - 2977703)

Per DTI-NCR Permit No 0043, Series of 2003

Easy recipes for another year of partying

FOR another year of cocktail parties, birthdays, anniversaries and other occasions, here are easy-to-prepare recipes prepared by the San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center, using San Miguel Purefoods Products.

Try the Magnolia Chicken Popcorn with Spicy Barbecue Sauce, Monterey Beef Skewers with Savory Dip and Purefoods Fiesta Ham with Orange Pistachio Cream Spread.

Cathedral Cheesecake Bars will delight those with a sweet tooth. Wash all these mouth-watering treats down with Minty Lemonade, Lime Splash, or Four Season Festival, aside from San Miguel Beer, of course.

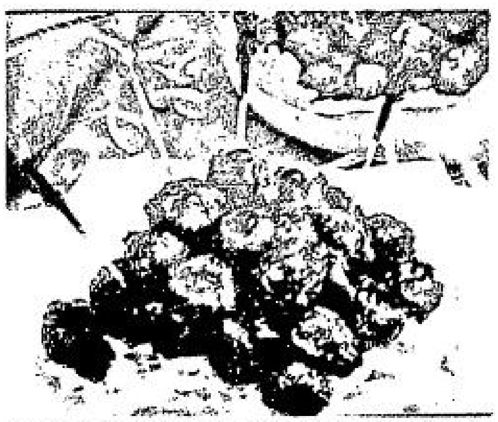
For more recipes and help in the kitchen, just log on to www.mygreatfood.com or send a self-addressed stamp envelope to San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center, Legazpi cor. Eagle Streets, Barrio Ugong, Pasig City.

Magnolia Chicken Popcorn in Spicy Barbecue Sauce

1 kg Magnolia Chicken Popcorn
Sauce:
¼ c Magnolia Gold Butter
1 c barbecue sauce (store-bought)
2 tbsp hot sauce

Deep-fry chicken popcorn according to package directions. Drain and set aside. Melt Magnolia Gold Butter in a saucepan. Add barbecue and hot sauces. Let simmer for five minutes. Remove from heat and toss in cooked chicken popcorn. Serve immediately.

Makes 10 servings.



CHICKEN Popcorn in Spicy Barbecue Sauce

Beef Bundles with Savory Cream Cheese Dip

¼ kg Monterey beef sirloin
¼ c teriyaki sauce (store-bought)
1 bundle fresh asparagus, cut into two
1 pc red bell pepper, thin strips
Savory Cream Cheese Dip:
One 250 g bottle Magnolia Cream Cheese Spread
3 tsp instant adobo powder mix (supermarket-bought)
2 tbsp full cream milk

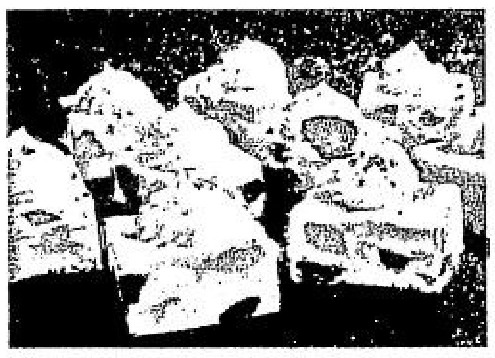
Cut sirloin into thin slices. Marinate in teriyaki sauce for one hour. Set aside. Blanch asparagus and red bell pepper. Wrap a piece of sirloin steak around a piece each of asparagus and red bell pepper and secure with a small skewer or toothpick. Fry or grill just to brown meat.

For the dip, blend together cream cheese spread, adobo mix and milk until smooth. Serve beef bundles while still warm with the dip on the side.

Makes 15-18 pieces.

Cathedral Cheesecake Bars

Crust:
1 ½ c Graham cracker crumbs
½ c melted Baker's Best
2 tbsp sugar
1 ½ grated lemon rind, optional
Filling:
One 225 g pack Magnolia Cream Cheese, softened
¼ c sugar
1 tbsp unflavored gelatin
3 tbsp full cream milk
1 c all-purpose cream, chilled
1 c Jellyace Assorted fruit flavors, diced
Topping:
whipped cream
Graham cracker crumbs



CATHEDRAL Cheesecake Bars

Crust:

Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Press onto the bottom of a 9 x 9 square pan lined with aluminum foil.

Filling:

Beat cream cheese and sugar until light and well blended. Meanwhile, dissolve unflavored gelatin in milk over low heat and add to cream cheese while still hot. Continue beating to blend well. In a separate bowl, whip cream until stiff and fold into cream cheese mixture. Fold in diced Jellyace. Pour onto crumb-lined pan. Chill until set. Cut into bars and pipe whipped cream on top. Sprinkle Graham cracker crumbs on top and garnish with mint leaves.

Makes 16 bars.

Four Seasons Festival

One 250 ml pack each of Magnolia fruit drinks—pineapple, mango, orange, guyabano
¼ c grenadine syrup
ice cubes

Combine all juices in a pitcher. Add grenadine syrup and mix well. Add ice cubes and serve cold. Makes 3 to 4 servings.

Lime Blast

1 liter (4 c) Sprite
1/3 c grenadine syrup
½ c Ginebra San Miguel
ice cubes

Combine Sprite, grenadine syrup, gin and ice in a pitcher. Serve cold. Makes 3 to 4 servings.

Minty Lemonade

4 pcs of 250 ml tetra packs Magnolia lemon iced tea drink
½ c mint leaves
1 pc lemon, sliced into thin pieces
ice cubes

Combine lemon iced tea drink, mint leaves and slices of lemon in a pitcher. Add ice cubes. Serve cold. Makes 3 to 4 servings.

JANUARY
1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8 9 10 11
12 13 14

BEEF Bundles with Savory Cream Cheese Dip

Create special memories in Singapore with our festive Ang Pow.

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- Lunar New Year Light-Up – Follow the trail of ruby-red lanterns and enchanting fairy lights. • Chinatown • 11 Jan – 15 Feb 2003
- Singapore River Hong Bao 2003 – A riverside carnival with arts, rides, food and of course, spectacular fireworks. • Marina Promenade • 30 Jan – 15 Feb 2003
- Chingay Singapore 2003 – Don't miss Singapore's grandest street parade; this year's theme is 'Ocean of Harmony'. • South Bridge Road • 8 Feb 2003
- Huayi Chinese Festival of Arts – Enjoy this grand celebration of Chinese arts and culture. • Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay • 6 – 16 Feb 2003
  - Ticketing information from www.sistic.com.sg

Fahn Wong – MediaCorp Artiste and star of Hollywood's new movie "Shanghai Knights"

*Free New Year goodies from Dragon City Group, Parco Bugis Junction, Bee Cheng Hiang, Da Dong Restaurant, Floating Seafood Restaurant and Smiling Orchid, and many other discount vouchers.

*Terms and conditions apply. While stocks last. Valid for travel from 15 Jan – 15 Mar 2003.

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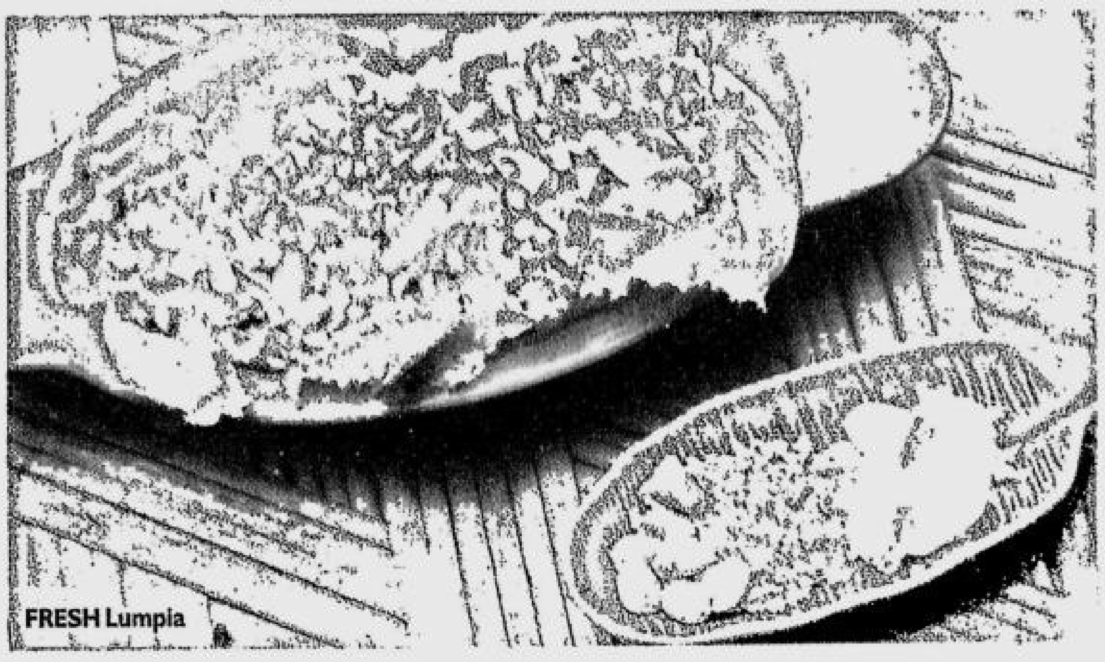
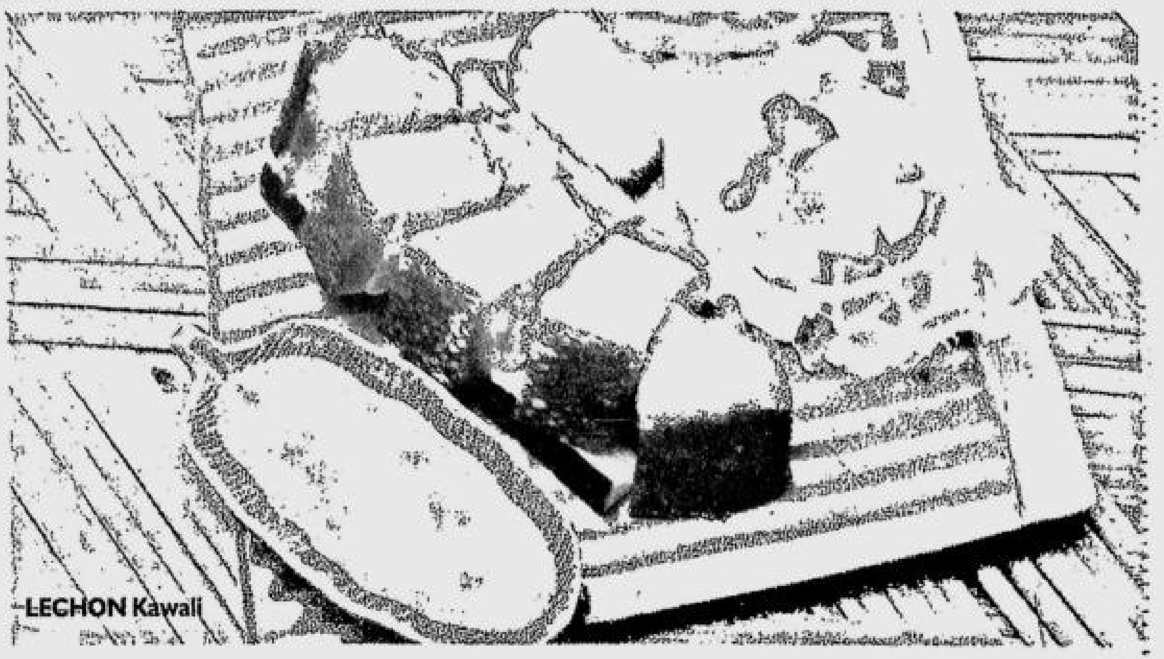


FRESH Lumpia



LECHON Kawali

Unabashedly Pinoy

BOY Alvarez, Theresa Reyes-Alvarez and JG Santiago

From page C1

meal and you still have space, you can select from several very Filipino desserts, such as Halo-halo (P70), Leche Flan (P40) or Mais con hielo (P50). Most dishes are served on bright colored green platters shaped liked leaves. And yes, the traditional soups like *sinigang* are served in *palayoks*.

Merienda fare

However, one of the best things about Sitio is its *merienda* fare. The Bibingka (P85) is one of the best we've had in a very long time. There is also Puto Bumbong (P60), delicious Pancit Palabok (P120) or Pancit Sitio (P100) and Dinuguan at Puto (P110). For heartier *merienda*, there is Arroz Caldo (P90) and Tokwa't Baboy (P100) and a host of other truly Filipino *merienda* entrees.

Most of the food served at Sitio will bring back memories of your *lola*'s cooking, the lazy summer afternoons of your youth or those huge, fun and noisy family reunions that are part of every Filipino's life. Sitio, the only truly Filipino restaurant at the Podium, is certainly a welcome addition to the many Asian and Western dining places at this mall if only for its affordable food and the memories it brings back.

Email the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

Resto promo offers 3 dishes for the price of 2

DINING OUT

HAVE a Great Meal, Great Deal at Burgoo. Available until Jan. 31, simply choose three from Burgoo's 10 most-ordered dishes and the one with the least price is absolutely free. Burgoo is at 310 Tomas Morato Extension, South Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City; 3/L, Powerplant Mall, Makati; and at the 2/L, The Podium, Mandaluyong City. Call 927-7424, 687-5254, and 898-1815.

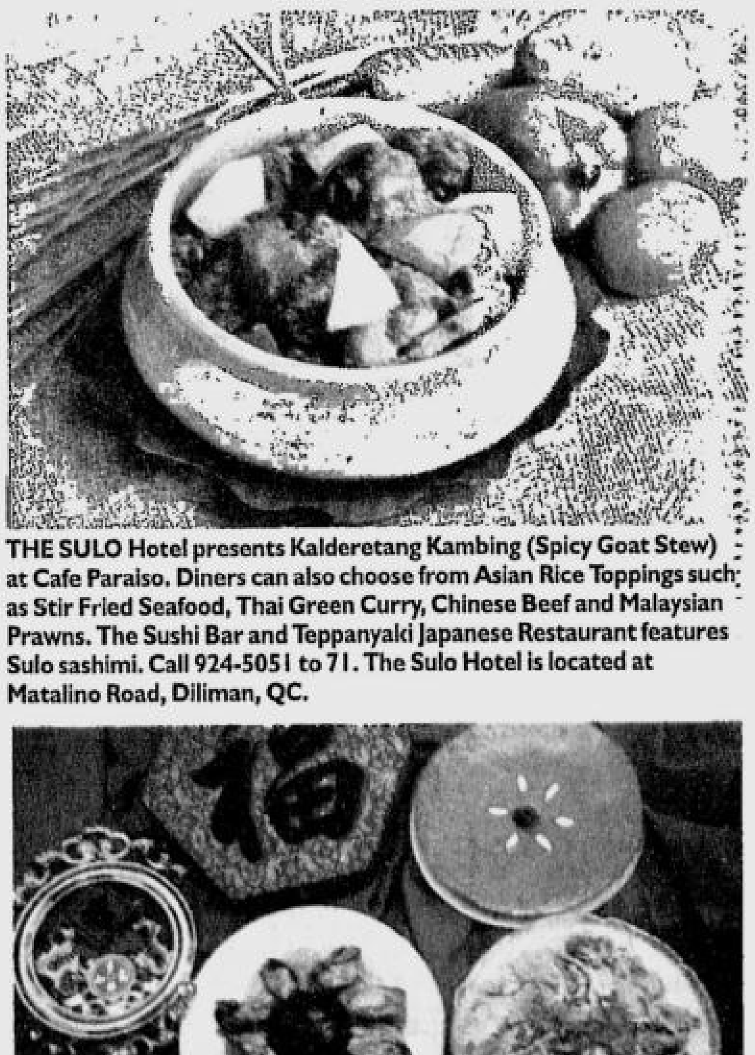
SBARRO has been popular for its White Cheese Pizza, among other delightful pizza flavors such as Supreme, Pepperoni, Mushroom, Hawaiian and All-Meat. It's made of 100 percent imported mozzarella cheese, fresh garlic, ricotta sauce and parsley.

LUK Yuen Noodle House now offers Chinese Tikoy. Available in a reusable microwavable plastic box at P88, it's very ideal for gift-giving or take-out. For dine-ins, the Tikoy is available in single servings of three sliced pieces at P38. Luk Yuen is located at Greenbelt 1 and Glorietta 2 (Makati), Cash & Carry (near Buendia, Makati), Greenhills Shopping Center, SM Megamall, and Alabang Town Center (beside Makati Supermart).

FISHING Village Restaurant welcomes the Chinese New Year with Buy 1 Take 1 Part II, with fried pigeon and yellow fish. Diners who order fried pigeon or yellow fish get a gift certificate for the same item, which they can use in their next dine-in visit. Good until March 2, this promo is exclusively for dine-in guests who order a la carte. Set menu and other promo packages are excluded. Fishing Village is located on the G/F Golden Bay Hotel, Roxas Boulevard and Padre Faura Street, Ermita, Manila. Call 536-8838/1916.

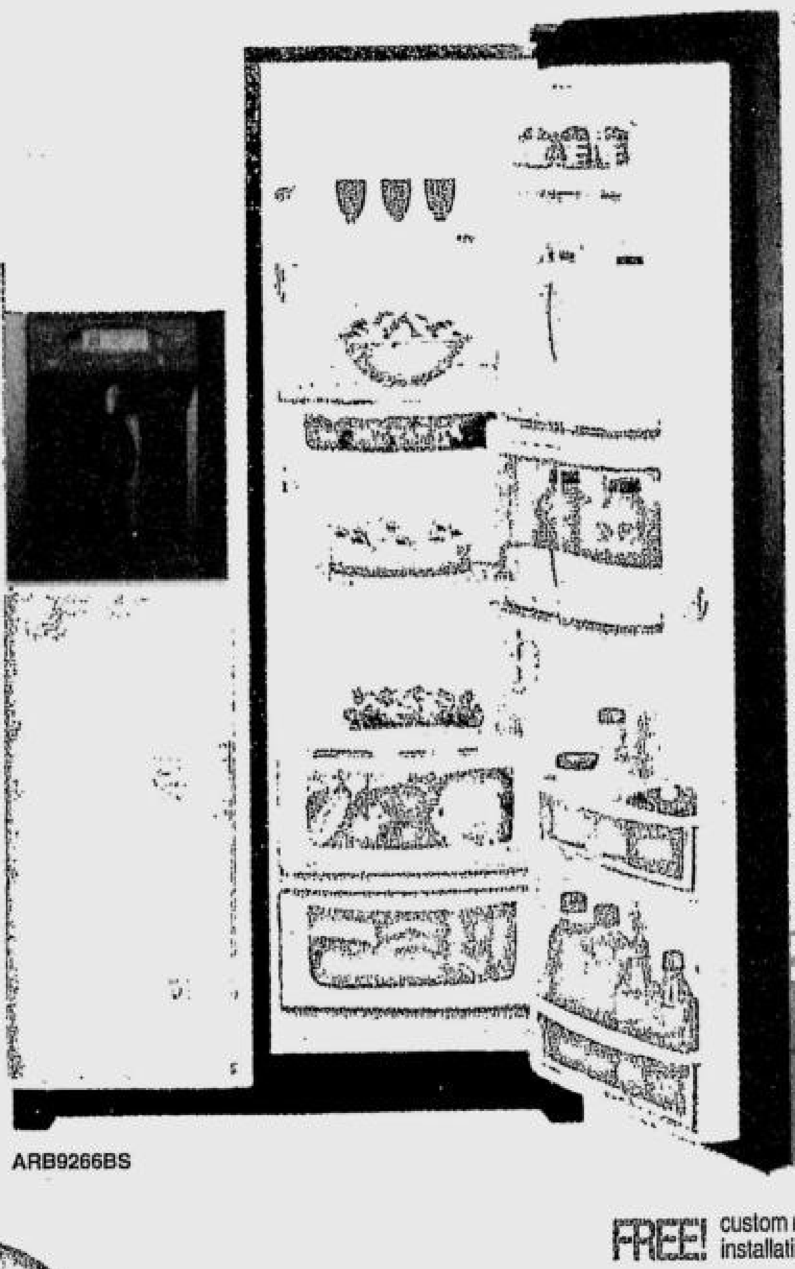
PEKING Garden's Chinese New Year set menu includes four kinds of appetizer, braised shark's fin soup with seafood, Peking Duck, prawns with sweet and spicy sauce, braised dried oysters with sea moss and lettuce, steamed hilsa herring fish, baked crabs with beancurd, rice topping, steamed soup dumplings and chilled mango shake with sago, all for P9,888. Peking

RESTO/ C2



THE SULO Hotel presents Kalderetang Kambing (Spicy Goat Stew) at Cafe Paraiso. Diners can also choose from Asian Rice Toppings such as Stir Fried Seafood, Thai Green Curry, Chinese Beef and Malaysian Prawns. The Sushi Bar and Teppanyaki Japanese Restaurant features Sulo sashimi. Call 924-5051 to 71. The Sulo Hotel is located at Matalino Road, Diliman, QC.

JADEGarden's Chinese New Year set menu has dried oysters with sea moss (for good business) and mutton in oriental sauce (to mean all is all right), plus its Hong Kong-style *tikoy*.



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Presenting the new line of Amana refrigerators. We invite you to discover refrigerators that reflect your style and exceed your expectations. Stunning in its efficiency, and remarkable in its flexibility, the new Amana refrigerators have an appeal that goes beyond its sleek appearance. No wonder Amana refrigerators are known as the number one in American refrigeration worldwide.

Temp-Assure® Temperature Control System
Amana's patented Temp-Assure® thermostatic control system provides independent controls for the freezer and fresh food compartment. Once you set the desired temperature for each compartment, the system automatically responds to temperature changes of just 1°C, eliminating the wide temperature variations found in other refrigerators. The system constantly provides the right temperature for optimum food preservation. This means food stays fresher longer, retaining nutritional value, texture and flavor..

Five Temperature Food Preservation System
For the ultimate in food preservation, we enhanced our Temp-Assure® system even further by providing a five-temperature food preservation system, which provides the five independently-controlled food preservation areas: Five-Star performance frost-free freezer, fresh food compartment, Temperature Controlled Beverage Chiller™, zero degree deli drawer, Clear Humidity Controlled Garden Fresh™ crisper compartments.

Temperature-Controlled Beverage Chillers™
Recognized by the American Dairy Association as beneficial to real dairy products, Amana's beverage chillers help keep your milk at 5°F colder than the rest of the refrigerator. This means your milk will stay fresher longer, providing your family with healthy, fresh milk and eliminating the cost of spoiled milk.

Superior Shelving Systems
Amana never forgets functionality. Our spacious design and flexible shelving provides easy access to all areas of the refrigerator. Adjustable split-width and full width shelves accommodate even the tallest gallon-sized bottles. EasyGlide™ Shelves put items along the back of the shelf within easy reach. Spillsaver™ shelves keep clean-up time to a minimum when a spill occurs.

Front Fill Ice and Water Dispenser
All Amana refrigerators incorporate factory-installed ice makers that provide approximately 4 pounds of ice in a 24-hour period. The electronic water dispenser utilizes a reservoir inside the refrigerator section that provides chilled water with a fill rate that is 40% faster than the competition.

Stainless Steel Design
A modern classic, all Amana refrigerators incorporate factory-installed, high quality SS304 stainless steel doors to provide the sleek and bold appearance of a professional appliance. Together with the designer metal bar handles, it provides a sleek appearance that easily makes it the center of attention in any kitchen.

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All Amana refrigerators utilize innovative energy saving components meet or exceed the most stringent US Department of Energy standards.

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THE AUTHOR checks out seafood in a Saigon market

Central Vietnam cooking was said to be the best since it was the base of royalty in the past

A (culinary) study tour of Saigon

By Gene Gonzalez
Contributor

I started to like Vietnam as I read Anthony Bourdain's "A Cook's Tour" in the plane from Manila.

But the "romance" started in my room at the sight of a beautiful lacquered bowl of dragon fruit, longans, chicos, star apple, petite bananas; a smaller bowl of freshly fried garlic peanuts and a small serving of shortbread cookies.

On my first day, my guide Tran Thi Thanh or Be for short, brought me to Pho 2000, the favorite noodle place of Bill Clinton, at the Ben Thanh market. I had a heaped bowl of Pho Bo Dac Bie or Pho Special with beef balls, beef flank, slivers of tendon and pork skin, fresh chives, with a whole egg floating. I added fresh lime, basil, coriander and red cayenne peppers, then topped them off with lightly steamed bean sprouts.

Saigon on a plate

A few swirls of homemade fermented bean paste and chili sauce and I had Saigon on my plate.

Afterwards, looking for small gems of eating places I found one near an Islamic building.

Beside a huge five-gallon jar filled with fried shallots, a woman on a low stool poured batter into a round, steaming drum skin-like surface.

She was cooking the chewy Banh Cuon wrapper by steam. She would lay the cooked wrapper flat with the help of a bamboo stick, add the filling, then roll it.

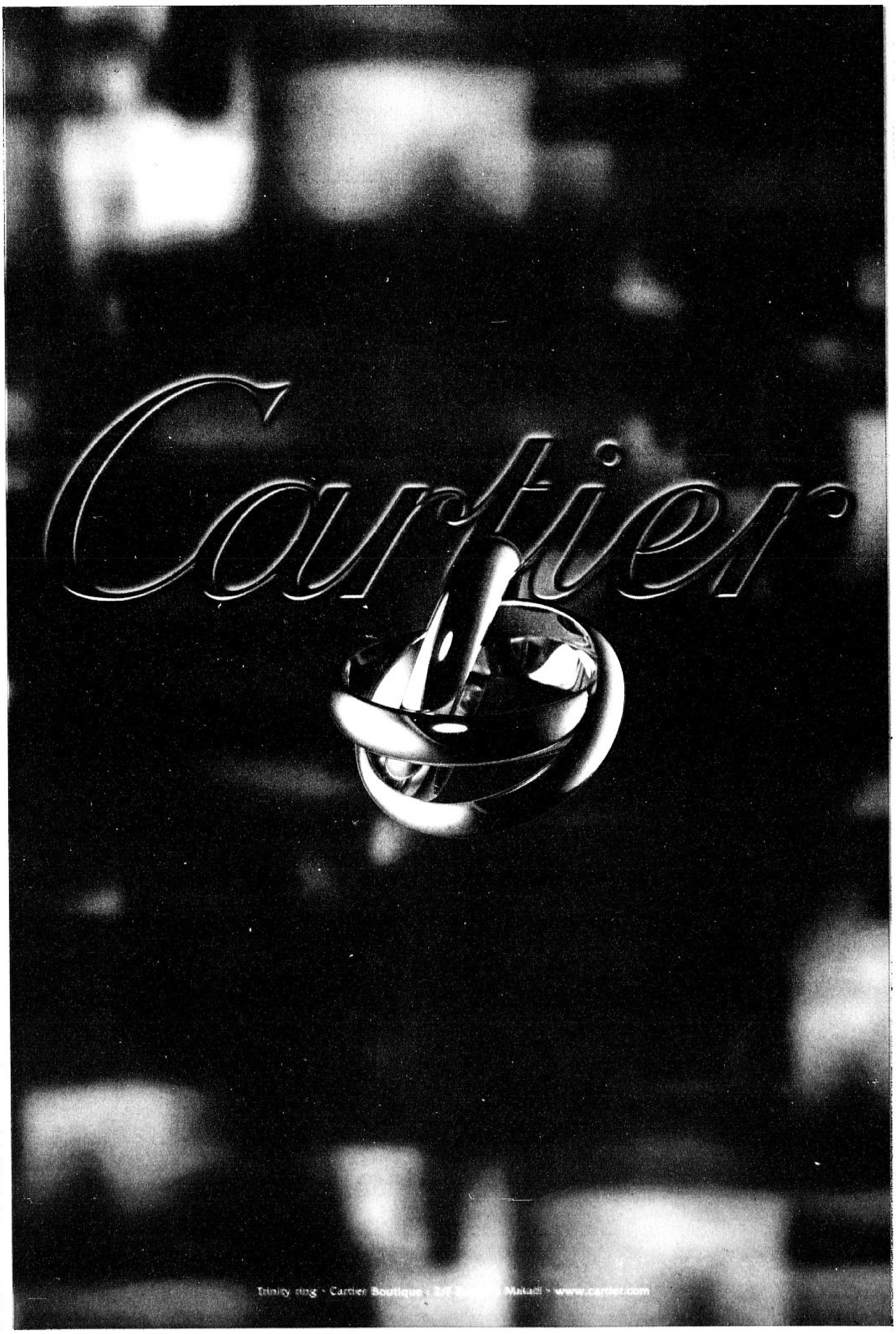
The long roll was cut into pieces and embellished with chopped basil, mint and fresh saw coriander. Thick slices of Vietnamese ham, squares of fermented sausage and chunks of pork meat loaf with the exterior done to a fluffy crisp to give the dish a myriad of textures were also added. A dollop of the golden fried shallots and a small bag of *nuoc chem* (fish sauce with chili and sugared water) dressing completed the concoction.

Starting the day right

Breakfast at Omni-Saigon was good. Aside from the usual

A CULINARY/ D4

OUTBACK
Free!



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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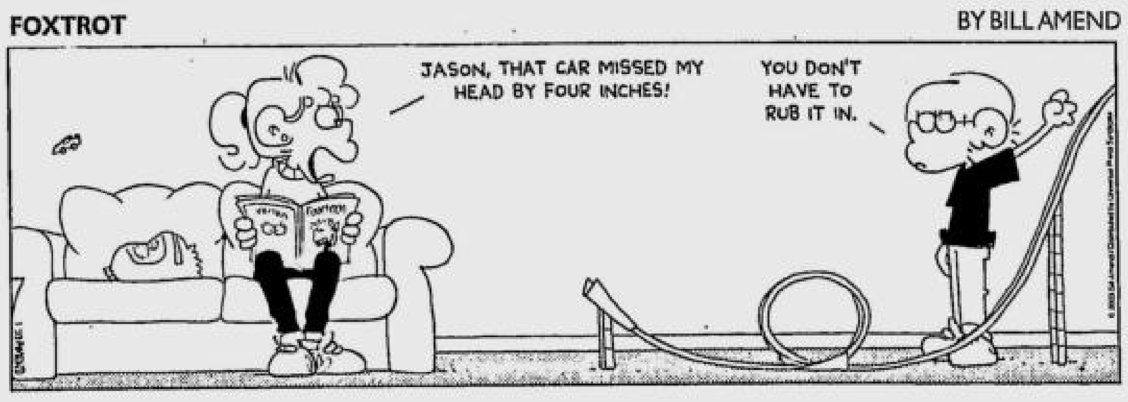
THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2003

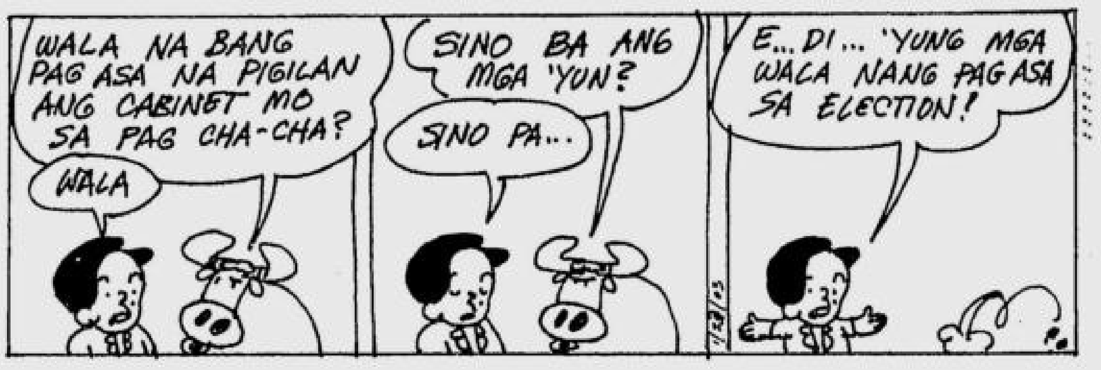
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


JASON, THAT CAR MISSED MY HEAD BY FOUR INCHES!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO RUB IT IN.

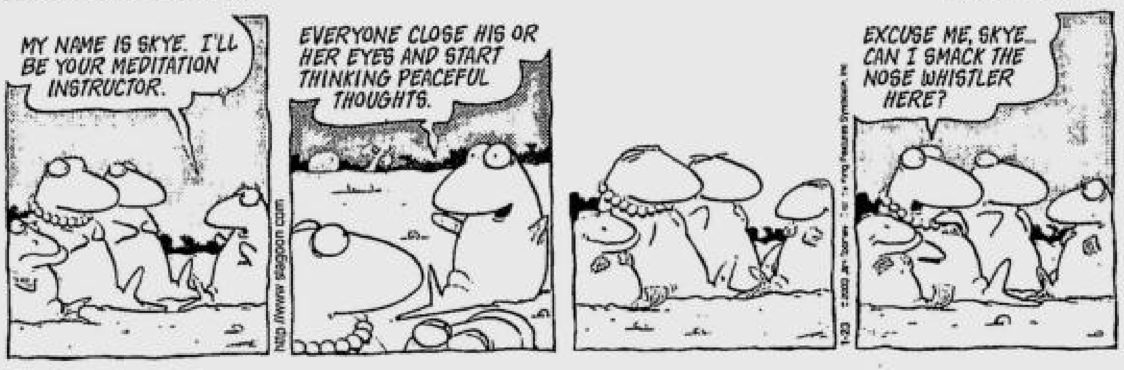
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


WALA NA BANG PAG ASA NA PIGILAN ANG CABINET MO SA PAG CHA-CHA?
WALA
SINO BA ANG MGA 'YUN?
SINO PA...
E... DI... 'YUNG MGA WALA NANG PAG ASA SA ELECTION!
1/23/03

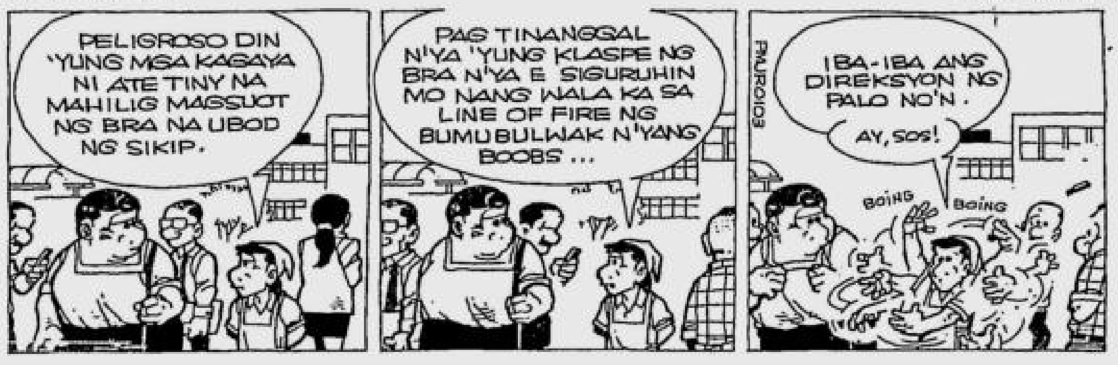
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


MY NAME IS SKYE. I'LL BE YOUR MEDITATION INSTRUCTOR.
EVERYONE CLOSE HIS OR HER EYES AND START THINKING PEACEFUL THOUGHTS.
EXCUSE ME, SKYE... CAN I SMACK THE NOSE WHISTLER HERE?
http://www.slagoon.com

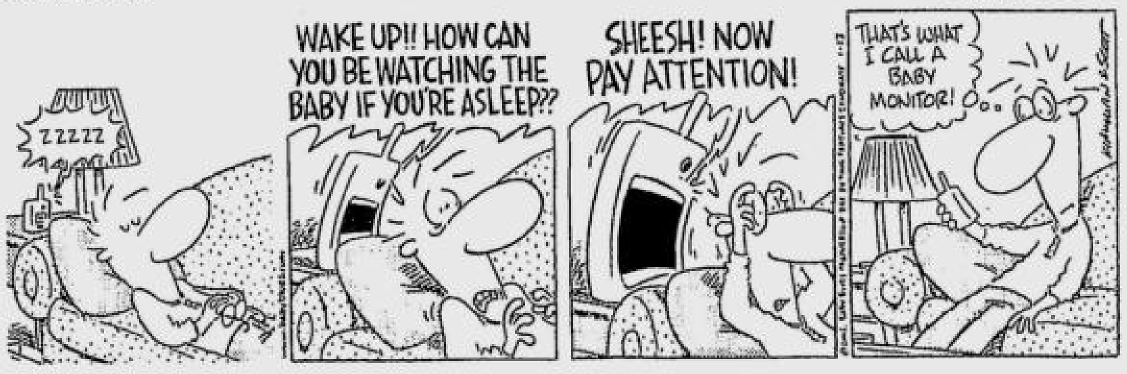
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PELIGROSO DIN 'YUNG MGA KAGAYA NI ATE TINY NA MAHILIG MAGSUOT NG BRA NA UBOD NG SIKIP.
PAG TINANGGAL N'YA 'YUNG KLASPE NG BRA N'YA E SIGURUHIN MO NANG WALA KA SA LINE OF FIRE NG BUMUBULWAK N'YANG BOOBS...
IBA-IBA ANG DIREKSYON NG PALO NO'N.
AY, SOS!
BOING
BOING
PMJR0103

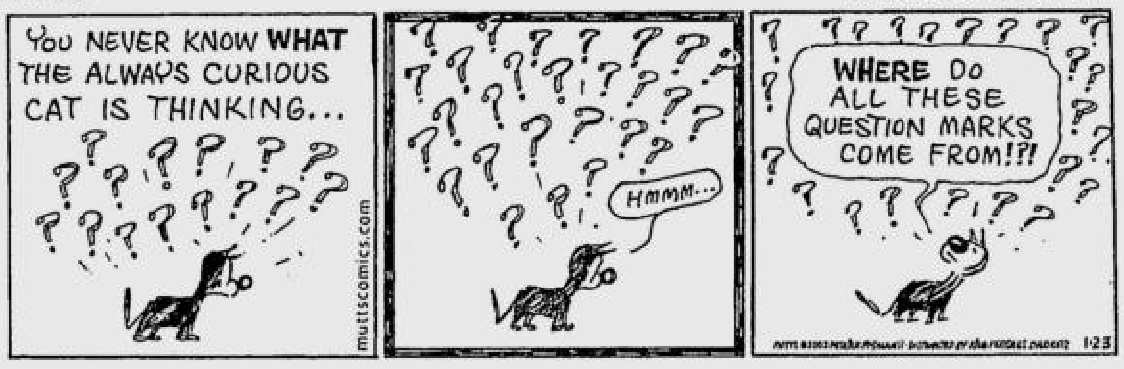
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZZZZZ
WAKE UP!! HOW CAN YOU BE WATCHING THE BABY IF YOU'RE ASLEEP??
SHEESH! NOW PAY ATTENTION!
THAT'S WHAT I CALL A BABY MONITOR!

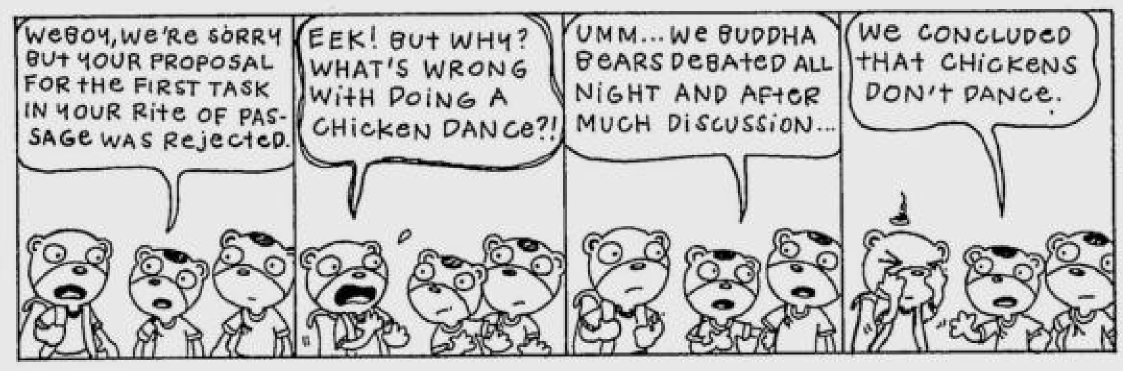
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT THE ALWAYS CURIOUS CAT IS THINKING...
HMMM...
WHERE DO ALL THESE QUESTION MARKS COME FROM!?!
muttscomics.com
1-23

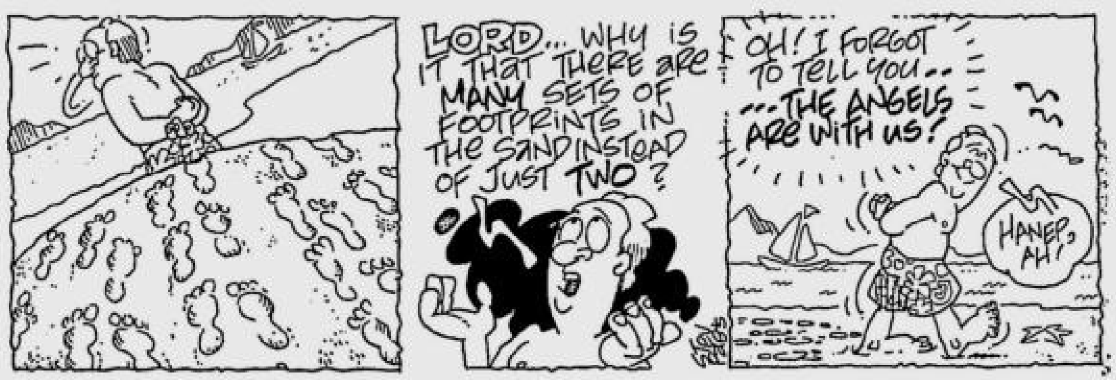
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WEBOY, WE'RE SORRY BUT YOUR PROPOSAL FOR THE FIRST TASK IN YOUR RITE OF PASSAGE WAS REJECTED.
EEK! BUT WHY? WHAT'S WRONG WITH DOING A CHICKEN DANCE?!
UMM... WE BUDDHA BEARS DEBATED ALL NIGHT AND AFTER MUCH DISCUSSION...
WE CONCLUDED THAT CHICKENS DON'T DANCE.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


LORD... WHY IS IT THAT THERE ARE MANY SETS OF FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND INSTEAD OF JUST TWO?
OH! I FORGOT TO TELL YOU... THE ANGELS ARE WITH US!
HANEP, AH!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Tiffani-Amber Thiessen, Anita Pointer, Princess Caroline, Rutger Hauer

Happy Birthday: Nothing will stand in your way this year except your own laziness. You are clever and articulate and your best efforts will bring positive results and rewards. This can be a wonderful year if you make the changes necessary. Your numbers are 2, 13, 17, 29, 33, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): This is not the time to pick a fight or waste your time arguing with someone who will never see things your way. Progress will be your antidote to anything or anyone who doesn't agree with you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You can enhance your reputation if you are willing to compromise and show others that you are adaptable. When it comes to personal issues you may have to sort things out by yourself.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Entertainment should be high on your list of things to do. Make purchases that will spruce up your wardrobe. Good conversation with interesting friends will spark all sorts of ideas.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Keep your thoughts to yourself. Family members especially may not be eager to follow your suggestions. Do your own thing.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Someone is probably jealous of your success. Your ability to do things with such finesse will put you above anyone who tries to compete with you. Follow your heart.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You've got what it takes to get ahead today. Present your ideas to people who can make a difference to your future. An opportunity for romance is evident. Make the first move.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): This is a great day to be introspective, quiet and sort out your own problems. Be quick to make whatever adjustments are necessary.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Favors will be granted if you present your case with passion. Your intent should be to make your home life more satisfying.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't take out your frustration and worry on the ones you love the most. Limitations are likely to slow you down, but if you are determined to get something done you will succeed.

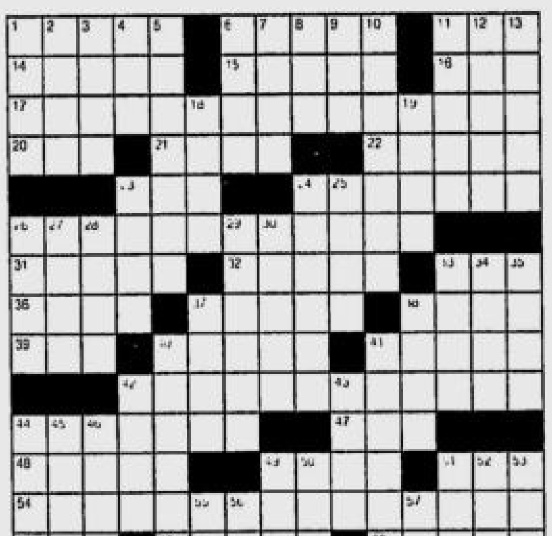
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): As long as you're willing to accept what's going on around you it will end up being beneficial. You will get the help you need if you present your ideas well.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You can excel if you put your mind to it. If someone tries to stand in your way you should be questioning your connection to this person. It's time to look forward and leave the past behind.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your personal life may be confusing you today. A past partner may try to come back into your life. Remember why this relationship didn't end up going anywhere.

Birthday Baby: You will be compassionate, loving and a wonderful organizer. You will be able to lead others in a positive way, but will have to give yourself a push in order to get started.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Bruce Venzke
Madison, WI

1/23/03

ACROSS
1 Jewish leader
6 Exhibitions
11 Research rm.
14 Body of water
15 Soissons' river
16 Conceit
17 Part 1 of a quip
20 Coop denizen
21 French islands
22 Plains abode
23 Bilko or Snorkel, e.g.
24 Tardy
26 Part 2 of quip
31 Stand by
32 Sharpens
33 Valuable stone
36 Means of checking
37 Empties
38 Skirt length
39 High-speed computer line
40 Immerse
41 Ready for action
42 Part 3 of quip
44 Sharply folded
47 __ Na Na
48 In a slow tempo, musically
49 Met highlight
51 Investment $ choice
54 End of the quip
58 Stroke gently
59 Sister's kid
60 Tropical plant with brilliant flowers
61 Sault __ Marie
62 Express
63 Go in

DOWN
1 Type of IRA
2 Yearning
3 __ around the block
4 Howl
5 Keen understanding
6 Dunaway of "Three Days of the Condor"
7 Small isles
8 End of a standoff
9 Cell substance letters
10 Comes to rest
11 Bounded
12 Come to terms
13 Portended
18 Canad. province
19 Get an earful of
23 Coating
24 On __ knee
25 Evenings before big days
26 Beaver Cleaver's dad
27 Is in debt
28 Support bar
29 How __ I know?
30 Racket
33 Info-processing slogan
34 "I Dream of Jeannie" star
35 Bog down
37 Small rodent
38 Yucatan people
40 Repudiates
41 Improve
42 Actress Jurado
43 Gobi's continent
44 Film snippets
45 Correct a clock
46 Maternally related
49 $ in the bank
50 Syngman of Korea
51 Smallest part of a buck
52 Have supper
53 White dwarf or red giant
55 Broadway success
56 Indeed
57 Fire

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

L	A	R	A		I	N	C	U	S		L	O	A	D
E	C	O	N		S	T	U	N	T		E	D	G	E
W	H	A	T	S	T	H	E	B	I	G	I	D	E	A
D	E	N	I	A	L			O	L	E		S	E	N
				L	E	A	F	L	E	T				
R	O	S	A	S		A	L	T		S	P	A	N	K
A	C	T	S		I	R	A		C	A	R	R	I	E
W	H	A	T	E	V	E	R	I	T	T	A	K	E	S
E	R	R	O	L	S		I	N	S		D	I	C	E
R	E	T	R	O		A	N	T		C	O	N	E	Y
				P	E	R	G	O	L	A				
S	S	I		E	R	G			O	L	I	V	I	A
W	H	A	T	D	O	Y	O	U	E	X	P	E	C	T
A	O	N	E		S	L	A	M	S		S	T	E	M
M	E	S	A		E	L	S	A	S		E	S	S	O

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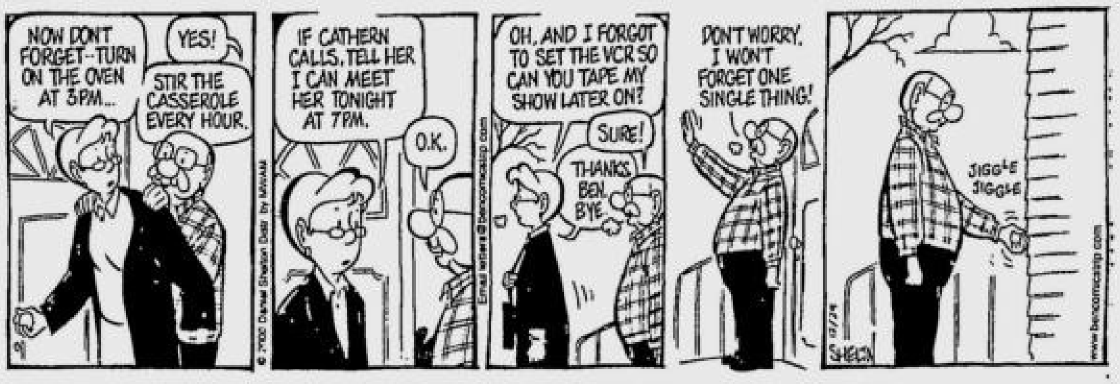
1/23/03

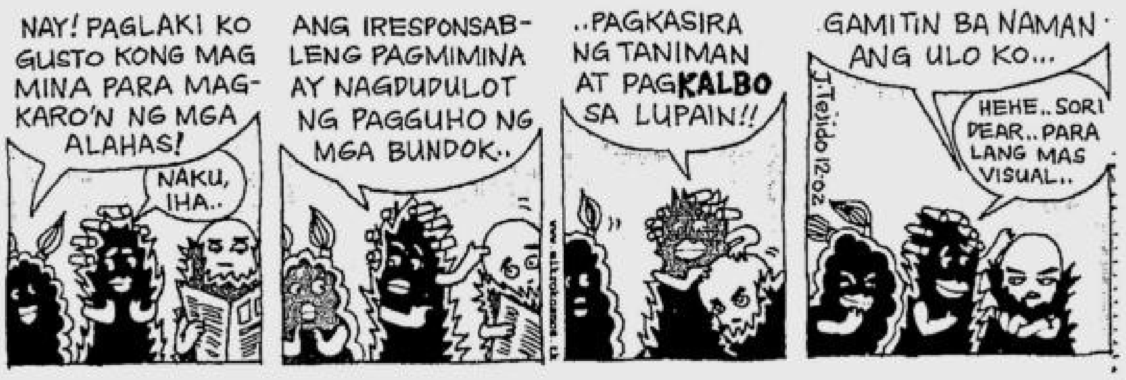
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


NOW DON'T FORGET--TURN ON THE OVEN AT 3PM...
YES!
STIR THE CASSEROLE EVERY HOUR.
IF CATHERN CALLS, TELL HER I CAN MEET HER TONIGHT AT 7PM.
O.K.
OH, AND I FORGOT TO SET THE VCR SO CAN YOU TAPE MY SHOW LATER ON?
SURE!
THANKS BEN. BYE.
DON'T WORRY. I WON'T FORGET ONE SINGLE THING!
JIGGLE JIGGLE
www.bencomicstrip.com

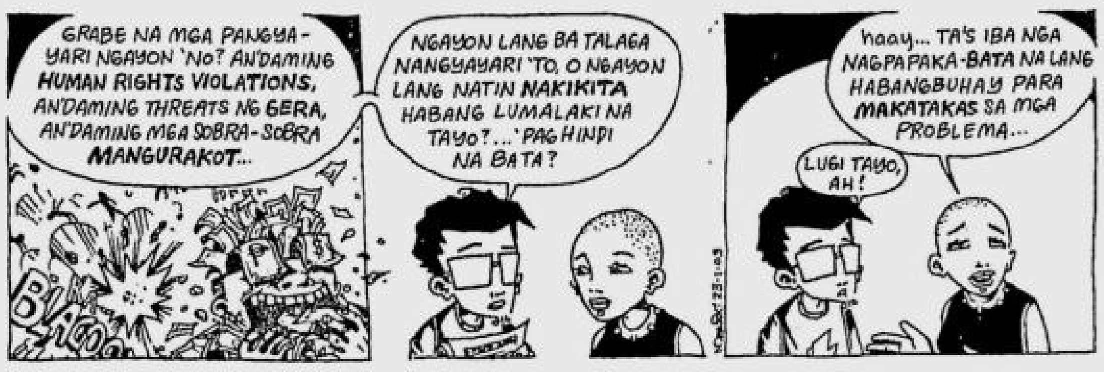
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAY! PAGLAKI KO GUSTO KONG MAG MINA PARA MAGKARO'N NG MGA ALAHAS!
NAKU, IHA..
ANG IRESPONSABLENG PAGMIMINA AY NAGDUDULOT NG PAGGUHO NG MGA BUNDOK..
..PAGKASIRA NG TANIMAN AT PAGKALBO SA LUPAIN!!
GAMITIN BA NAMAN ANG ULO KO...
HEHE.. SORI DEAR.. PARA LANG MAS VISUAL..
J.Tejido 12.02

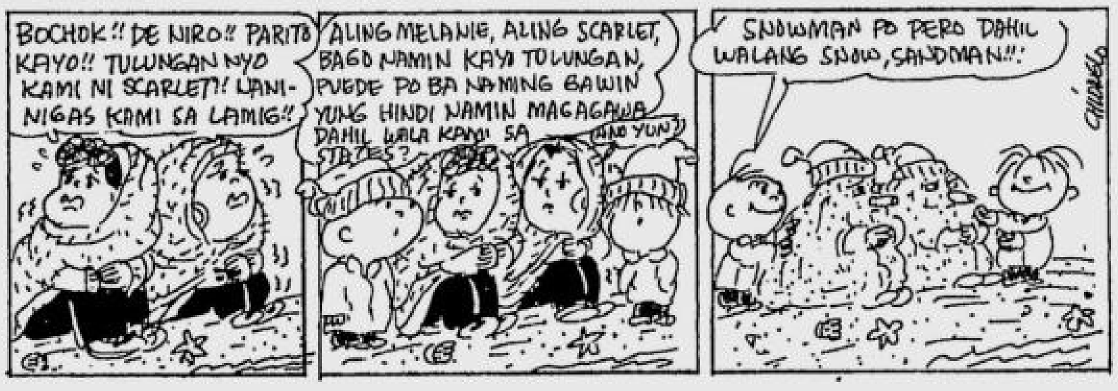
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


GRABE NA MGA PANGYAYARI NGAYON 'NO? AN'DAMING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, AN'DAMING THREATS NG GERA, AN'DAMING MGA SOBRA-SOBRA MANGURAKOT...
NGAYON LANG BA TALAGA NANGYAYARI 'TO, O NGAYON LANG NATIN NAKIKITA HABANG LUMALAKI NA TAYO?... 'PAG HINDI NA BATA?
haay... TA'S IBA NGA NAGPAPAKA-BATA NA LANG HABANGBUHAY PARA MAKATAKAS SA MGA PROBLEMA...
LUGI TAYO, AH!

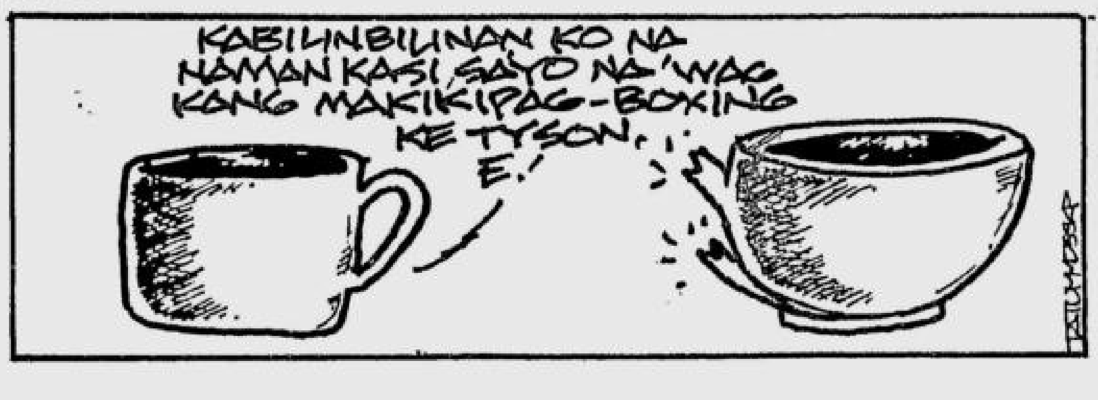
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

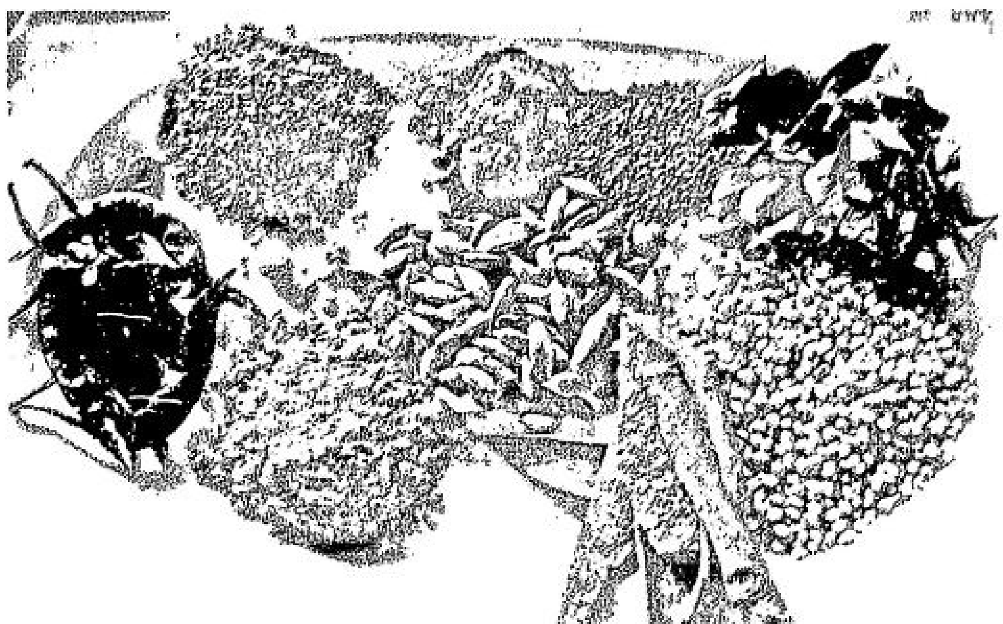

BOCHOK!! DE NIRO!! PARITO KAYO!! TULUNGAN NYO KAMI NI SCARLET?! LANINIGAS KAMI SA LAMIG!!
ALING MELANIE, ALING SCARLET, BAGO NAMIN KAYO TULUNGAN, PUEDE PO BA NAMING BAWIN YUNG HINDI NAMIN MAGAGAWA DAHIL WALA KAMI SA STATES?
ANO YUN?
SNOWMAN PO PERO DAHIL WALANG SNOW, SANDMAN!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

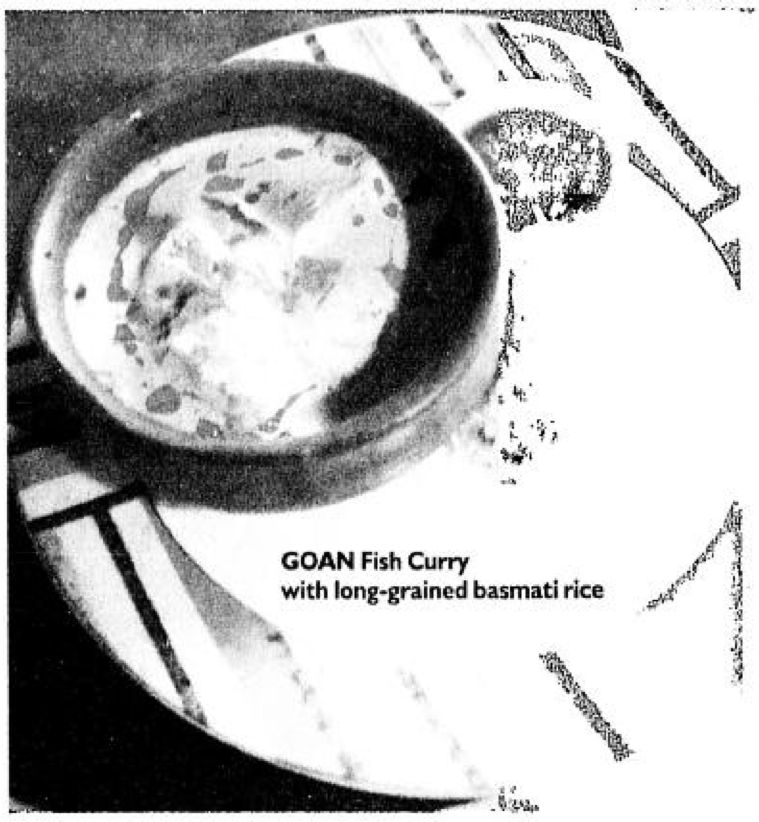
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


KABILINBILINAN KO NA NAMAN KASI SAYO NA 'WAG KANG MAKIKIPAG-BOXING KE TYSON, E.!
TATUM

PHOTOS BY ERIK ARAZAS



A MELANGE of spices sourced here and abroad



GOAN Fish Curry with long-grained basmati rice

Spicing up the lunchtime scene

Indian guest chef Sudipto Bhattacharya of New Delhi and InterCon's executive chef Cyrille Soenen have come up with one cool—or should we say hot?— Indian foodfest

By Alex Y. Vergara

THERE'S more to Indian food than curry, coconut milk and red-hot chili peppers.

In fact, Chicken 65, one of the featured dishes in the ongoing Indian food festival at the InterContinental Manila's Café Jeepney, is said to have derived its name from the number of spices used to prepare it.

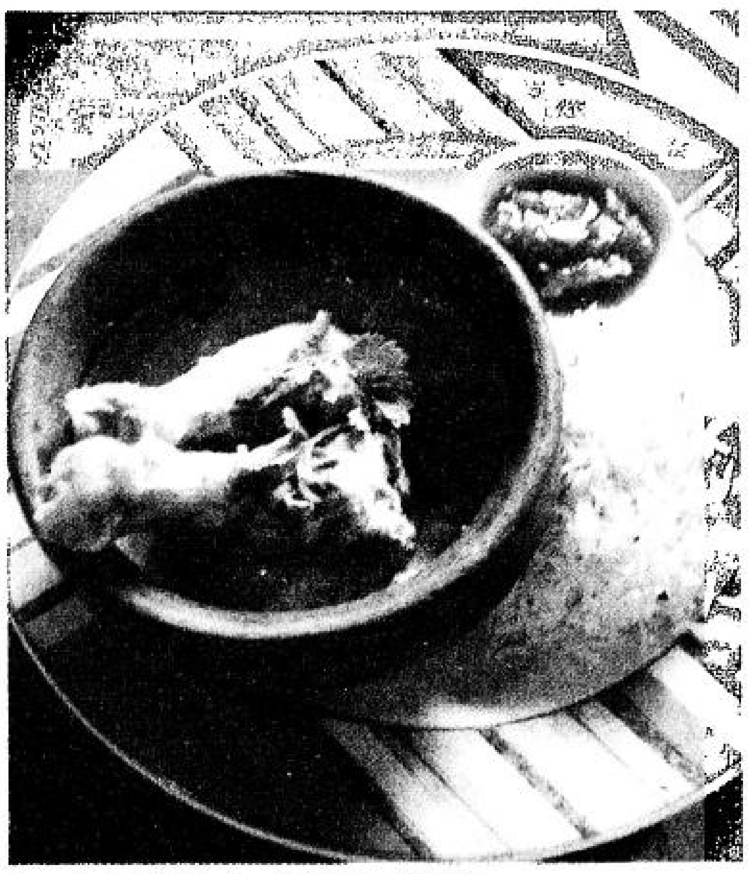
The dish consists of small pieces of deep-fried chicken liberally flavored with coriander seeds, pepper and a host of other spices.

Indian guest chef Sudipto Bhattacharya of New Delhi doubted if anyone could come up with that many spices, although he did use no less than 40 different kinds of spices to jazz up his version of Chicken 65.

"I can't come up with another 25 [spices]," he said with a smile. It's more believable then that the dish got its name from a 1965 blockbuster that starred one of India's matinee idols. The character in the movie ate roasted chicken, and before long, an enterprising restaurateur was said to have repackaged his fried chicken dish and renamed it Chicken 65. The dish became such a hit that every big town and city in India soon came up with its own version.

"There are 30 states in India," added Bhattacharya, who recently teamed up with acclaimed Indian chef Jiggs Kalra in exploring and promoting India's regional cuisine through food festivals and glossy cookbooks. "No two states serve the same kind of food."

INDIAN guest chef Sudipto Bhattacharya and InterContinental Manila's executive chef Cyrille Soenen



MURG Shahi Korma with long-grained basmati rice

Renaissance

Billed as "Spice," the three-week event features the distinct culinary delights of the city of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. Punjabi food is generally spicy, said the guest chef, while Lucknow dishes are subtler.

"Both places have developed a strong culinary tradition, but Lucknow has lately undergone a renaissance in food," he added.

In addition to a dozen or so spices Bhattacharya brought with him from India, he shopped at Uncle Ed's in Manila with Frenchman Cyrille Soenen, the InterCon's executive chef, for locally available spices. The two men constantly communicated with each other via e-mail prior to Bhattacharya's arrival in Manila last Saturday.

"Based on his e-mail," said Soenen, "I was able to scout for spices in advance and advise him to bring the ones not readily available locally."

Soenen didn't make any attempt to dissuade his Indian colleague from preparing fiery dishes. Nor did he advise him to temper them to cater to the timid Filipino palate. Instead, the two agreed to come up with a mix of dishes that best represents the two states featured in the festival. Bhattacharya has promised to whip up close to 100 dishes, served in batches or cycles, before the gastronomic event ends.

Variety

"Since not all dishes in India are hot," said Soenen, who confessed to know very little about Indian food before meeting Bhattacharya, "people can expect to savor a variety of flavors and culinary experiences."

Think of them as India's version of pasta with the yellow spaghetti sauce. Only the Nizami Tarkari Biryani, long-grained basmati rice cooked with garden-fresh vegetables, goes well with Daal Tadkewali, a rich lentil-based yellow sauce flavored with butter garlic, cumin seeds, green chilies and freshly ground masala.

Bhattacharya did away with pork and beef in favor of chicken, lamb and fish. Doi Machichi consists of tender slices of king fish marinated in mustard and cooked in onion and yogurt gravy, while Murg Makhai is chicken cooked in zesty tomato sauce. Aside from Tawey Kiboti or simmered cubes of young goat glazed with masala, the Jeepney's carving section offers roasted lamb.

"There are Indians who don't eat beef as well as those who don't eat pork," said Bhattacharya, who used to work in various capacities at the Park Royal InterContinental, New Delhi. "We in the hotel business have learned to limit our dishes to chicken, lamb and fish." But definitely not in the number and variety of spices they use.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

Rice to the occasion

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Randy Hormillosa

World-famous rice bowls are prepared from a recipe that goes back more than a hundred years

RICE, the world's most versatile grain, goes well with a wide assortment of seasonal vegetables, meats, seafoods and spices. The mild grains bring out the flavors of garlic, ginger, curry, soy sauce and chili peppers. They also blend well with beef, chicken and pork.

At Yoshinoya, which opened recently its third outlet at Park Square I, Ayala Center, Makati, diners will love the gyudon, a bowl of steaming rice and tender beef with special sauce and other toppings.

"Yoshinoya uses only the choicest ingredients for its rice bowls— tender and high-quality meats, fresh vegetables, special spices and the finest rice grains—prepared from a recipe that goes back more than a hundred years, thus making this specialty world-famous," said Raffy C. Lantin, marketing director, consumer products division of Yoshinoya.

Yoshinoya's beef comes from the United States, the rice from Thailand, and the chicken, pork and veggies from local sources.

The 109-seater Yoshinoya at Park Square I, operated by Yoshinoya Century Pacific, a partnership between the Manila-based Century Pacific Group, Yoshinoya D&C Co. Ltd. and Mitsui & Co. Ltd. of Japan, is the 1,073rd in the world. The other two local branches are at 3/F Metropoint Mall, Edsa corner Taft Avenue and Zamora Streets, Pasay City, and at the upper ground level, SM Southmall Alabang, Zapote Road, Las Piñas City.

Yoshinoya's food is a combination of two cultures. While it's traditional Japanese cuisine, it's served in a fast-food environment. "So while the food looks and tastes like nothing else, you'll find that the value and speed of service is very familiar," Lantin said.

Balanced meal

Food served in a bowl has sentimental value for both restaurateurs and customers. The cost of most Asian dishes is low, and one-bowl meals make for rapid turnover, allowing lunchtime clients to get in and out of a place quickly. But meals in a bowl can also be served in fine-dining restaurants.

Preparation tends to be simple and quick. "People are realizing that fast food doesn't have to be hamburger, fries and shake. These (rice) dishes give you a balanced, healthy meal in a bowl," Lantin said.

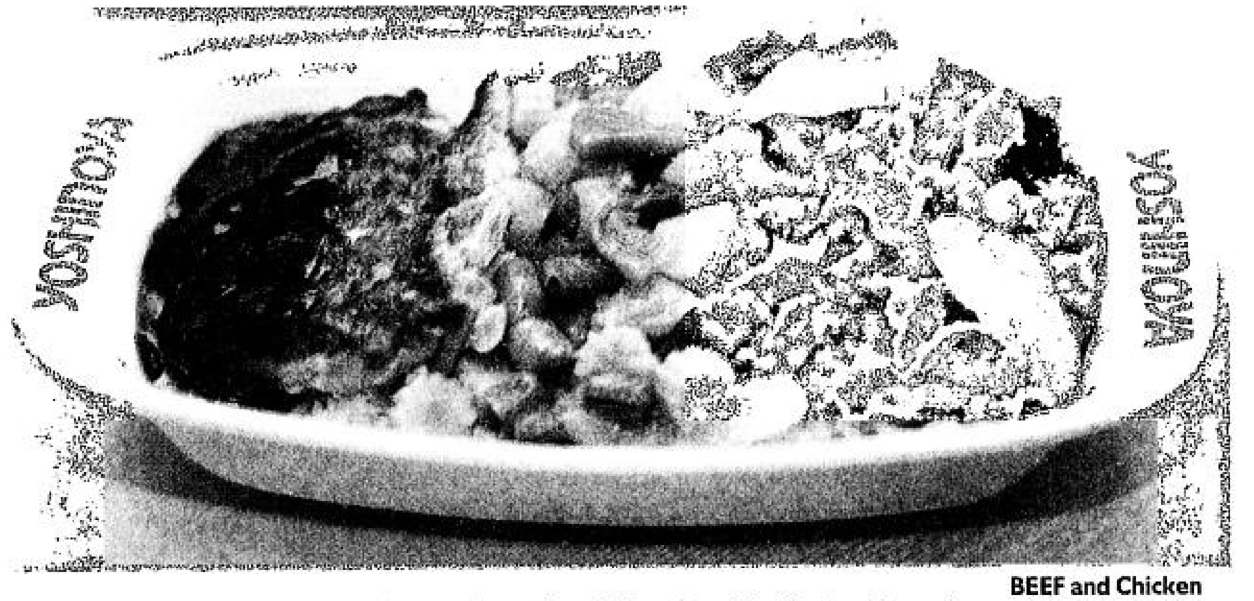
Aside from giving a healthy and nutritious alternative to the usual fast-food fare, Yoshinoya also offers the best value for money. Its filling Beef Bowl, Chicken Bowl and Pork Bowl are available for P59 each.

The Beef Bowl has thin juicy slices of USDA-choice beef simmered in fresh onions, with a special sauce of herbs and spices, and heaped on a bed of steaming, fluffy rice.

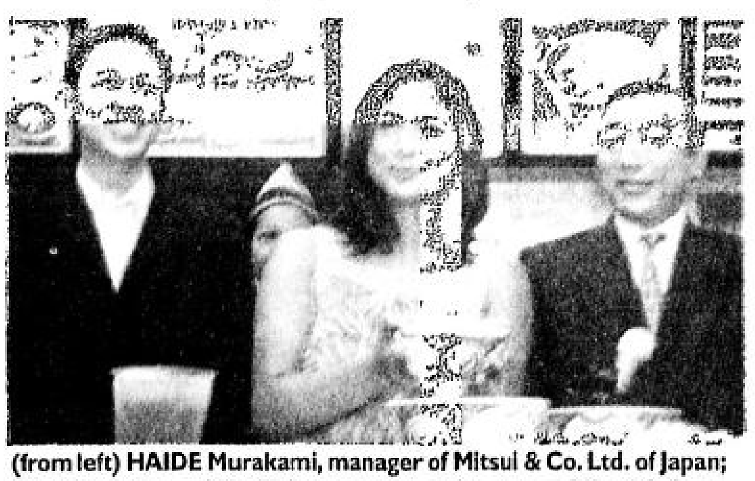
The Chicken Bowl is filled with tender, golden-brown slices of chicken topped with teriyaki sauce and a variety of vegetables and spread over a bed of plump, steaming white rice.

Yoshinoya also offers side dishes such as kimchi, desserts like Coffee Jelly and Fruit Salad and a specially formulated beverage, Green Iced Tea.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

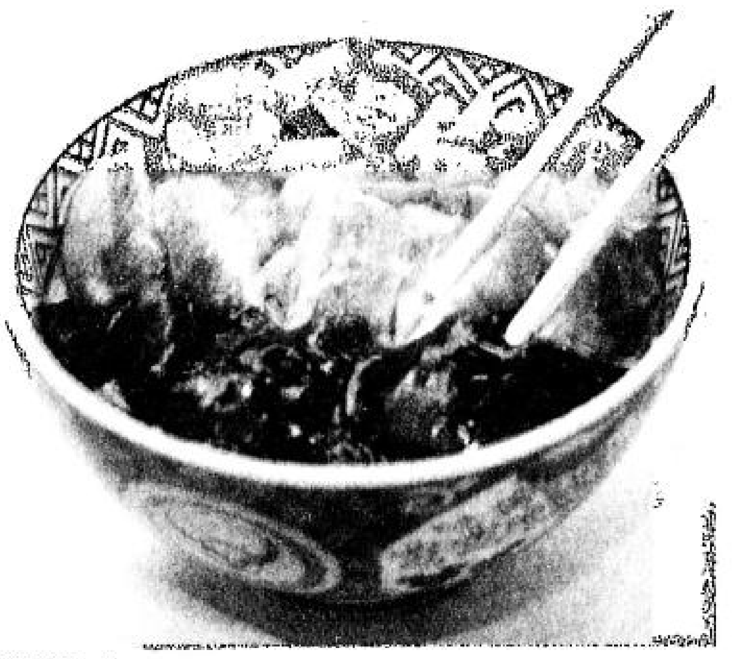


BEEF and Chicken Combo Bowl



(from left) **HAIDE Murakami, manager of Mitsui & Co. Ltd. of Japan; Joyce Jimenez; and Mr. Nakayama, general manager, Mitsui & Co. Ltd.**

BEEF Bowl



PORK Bowl

A (culinary) study tour of Saigon

From page D1

sausage, hash browns, ham, bacon, there were fresh omelets, a selection of native Vietnamese noodle soups and rolls, Japanese miso Kombu soup, Nippon pickles and teriyaki. Equally tempting were gaufrettes or crispy fresh waffles.

There was also an assortment of fresh tropical fruits like ultra sweet chico, star apple, dragon fruit, etc.

I met executive sous chef Justin Tuong as I was having breakfast. As we began my lessons in Vietnamese cooking, I found that all the ingredients had already been prepared.

Chef Truyen, who has been promoting Vietnamese cuisine around Asia including the Philippines, was one of my teachers. Her English was impeccable and her kitchen manner superb. Another chef, Liem, explained the nuances of each dish and the variations made in south, central and north Vietnam.

Chef Liem said central Vietnam cooking was superior since it was the base of the country's royalty in the past. Food was spicier, sauces more varied and preparations tedious.

Complex flavors

Chefs Truyen and Liem presented me with dishes of complex flavors yet simple and easy to prepare. We did the familiar stuff in the morning such as Pho Bo, the traditional noodle soup. Chef Tuong explained the names of the various *pho*. He said the soup should simmer for at least six hours in low flame to prevent its being cloudy.

Familiar wood spices such as cinnamon and star anise went into the bouquet garni bag. I also saw *thao qua*, a nutmeg-looking dried seed with smoky and spicy characteristics. I found out that *hoisin* was a substitute for the fermented bean dip used by the Vietnamese. Instead of fresh coriander (*wansoy*), *ngo gaior* saw leaf coriander was used in the soup, with two kinds of basil. Rau-om, a cumin-tasting herb which I've only seen in Saigon, was also used.

I learned how to make the all-purpose dressing, Nuoc Mam Chan, which we used for Goi Sua Souy Hai Seng or Jellyfish Salad, and how to fold the transparent fresh spring roll to show its contents.

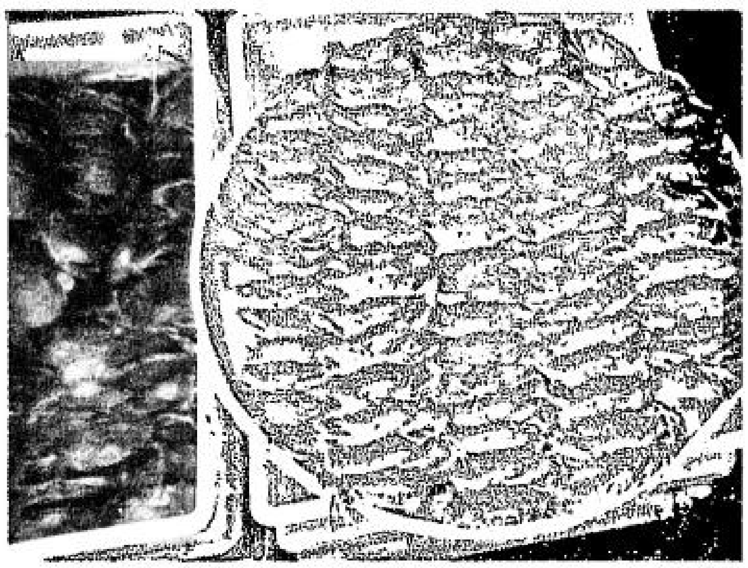
Something wonderful

The Goi Cuon or fresh salad balls with the transparent wrapper showing the shrimps, herbs and vermicelli inside were wonderful dipped in fermented bean paste sauce tasting of beans, nuts and garlic.

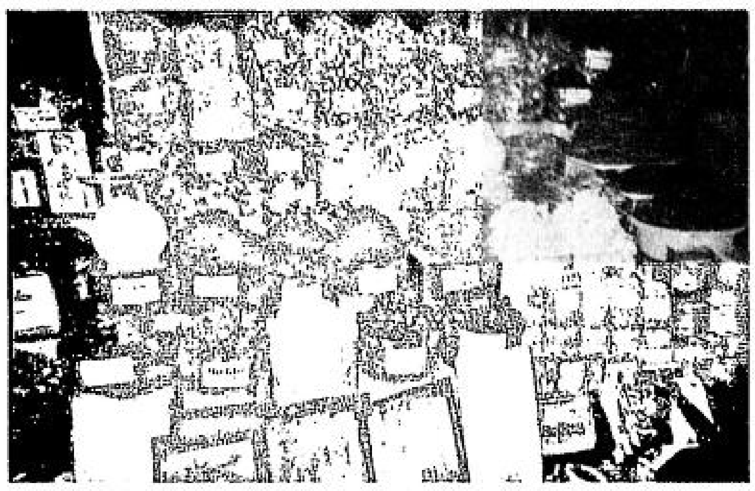
I also ate fried spring rolls wrapped in lettuce, with Vietnamese basil and mint, dipped in a light *nuoc cham* sauce.

The jellyfish salad was a complex mix of the sweet, sour flavors of fish sauce, chili, lime juice and sesame oil made more interesting by pickled carrots and juicy, sweet chunks of pomelo.

THE AUTHOR (third from left) with his Vietnamese teachers Liem, Justin Tuong and Truyen



LIVE softshell crabs at Ben Loch market



DELIGHTFUL treats at Ben Loch market

By afternoon, the simmering broth for the *pho* had become full flavored, scented with the wood and seed spices.

Liem showed some Vietnamese herbs rarely or not seen in the Philippines but which were very interesting such as saw coriander, occasionally available in Tagaytay. Rao-om tasted like Italian parsley, mint and cumin while mint stalk was taro-like and evocative of menthol.

In the afternoon we prepared caramelized mudfish (*dalag*) in a clay pot, skewered ground beef wrapped in fragrant leaf then grilled, our favorite grilled Chao tom or shrimp mousse in sugar cane skewer, which we wrapped in lettuce with some local basil, mint and fresh noodles. Soup was sweet-sour mudfish with pineapple, mint stalk and *okra*.

Market day

The next morning we went on a market tour. Ben Loch market had mudfish as large as human calves and cut into steaks, gigantic frogs' legs, eels of every sort, live soft shell crabs. I bought some herbs, which I planted back home.

The coffee blends in the market looked good. But I was particularly fascinated by the lotus scented tea, which was exotic and sensual.

Lunch featured the afternoon's lesson—Bun Xeo, a rice crepe with crisp creases with coconut milk and turmeric and filled with chicken, slivers of pork, chopped spring onions, bean sprouts, softened yellow mung beans. It was eaten with *nuoc cham* or fish sauce. The herbs served, such as fish leaf, which tasted quite fishy, had flavors that needed some getting used to.

There was a shrimp and lotus stalk salad and, the Pinoy favorite, Goi Ga or Chicken Salad but it was sharper than what was served in Manila. It had more chili and flaked roasted chicken.

Merienda was a beer called Bababa (333), Vietnam's best brew, which I drank while talking to Omni GM Henk Meyknecht, sales and marketing manager Eugene Tamesis and food and beverage manager/executive chef Tomas Henseler.

Later, I went to the Manoir de Khai, an exponent of haute cuisine (there is a Maxim's in Vietnam but Manoir was supposedly better). The manor, an old French villa, had no sign just a small lit menu. Dining was mainly by reservation. The owner, Mr. Khai, was not there but Nguyen Thanh Long, the manager, took care of me.

Uniformed waiters in Vietnamese-inspired burgundy suits greeted me at the courtyard with a long candlelit pond. The foyer, where the bar was, had wonderful, plush French provincial Empire furniture pieces.

The dining room had fresh flowers, gold leaf candle stands, burgundy runners and a marvelous gold leaf ceiling.

For appetite teaser or *amuse guelle*, two *feuilletes* of foie gras with puffy pastry were served piping hot with a light touch of cilantro. Crusty warm crisp rolls were also served. My white wine came with a frangipani flower on the coaster.

The first course was a duck breast salad served almost rare with spots of duck demiglace. The bed of greens was a good foil to the rich duck breast with a brunoise of apple tossed with frisee and endives scented with orange zest.

The sorbet was very finely textured, probably given a touch of meringue during the freezing and flavored with lemon, Angostura bitters. Though a little too sweet, it still worked well as entremet.

Chef Gong changed the sauce to my main course, a local sea bass (*apahap* or *barramundi*), to a warm butter sauce gently whisked with fish stock and martini. The fish delicately melted in my mouth, the warm butter sauce adding richness to the gentle tasting flesh.

Cheeses were served, including Cambozola, what looked like orange-rinded, well-aged Port Salut or St. Albray, and a Brie (with a suspicious, overly white rind). The cheeses were kept and aged very well and was a good savoy after the main course.

Dessert was a gorgeous creme brulée melting and filled with creamy goodness. The burnt sugar crust had a delicate gossamer but crunchy film that lent texture to the velvety smoothness of the creme brulée.

E-mail the author at genegonzalez@mydestiny.net

New look, smart moves and tempting teriyaki

SAVOR the new menu of Tokyo Tokyo's teriyaki dishes like Chicken Yakitori, Pork Teriyaki, Beef Teriyaki Don, all at P89, or Salmon Teriyaki at P99.

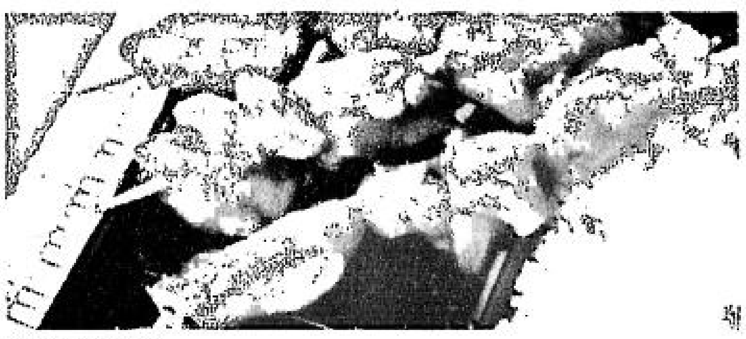
Try also its classic favorites: classic Shrimp Tempura, Yakisoba Noodles, Pork Tonkatsu, Sushi and Sashimi; new teriyaki dishes like Beef Teriyaki Don and Salmon Teriyaki.

Also enjoy Tokyo Tokyo's hip interiors, a fresh take on the original Mondrian black, red and white design. Lighter colored wooden seats, eye-catching wall graphics and larger spaces add to the new dining atmosphere.

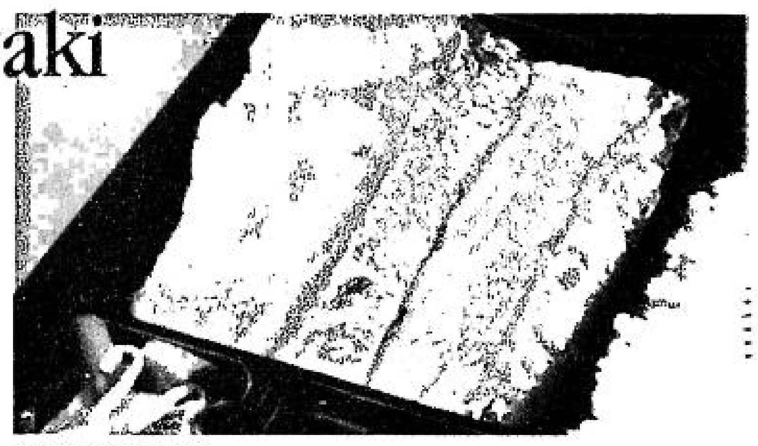
You can also experience a more convenient way to pay with your Smart Money card. All you need to do is simply download the Tokyo Tokyo logo and promo text message to get free Potato Balls with every P100 purchase. Just text the word TOKYO and send it to 290 to receive your Tokyo Tokyo logo. Present the logo download at the counter when you pay, and get your free Potato Balls.

Visit Tokyo Tokyo at Glorietta 1, Eastwood Citywalk, Harrison Plaza, Robinsons Ermita Padre Faura Wing, Rockwell Power Plant, SM Centerpoint, Fairview, Manila, Megamall, North Edsa Carpark, North Edsa Main, Pampanga, Sucat; Tutuban Centermall 1, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Greenbelt Mall, Sta. Lucia East, Robinsons Metro East. Soon to open: Greenhills Shopping Center and SM Bicutan.

BEEF Teriyaki Don



PORK Teriyaki



SALMON Teriyaki

chili's
Like No Place Else.
This space is reserved for Chili's Cajun Chicken Sandwich.
Get your hands around one now!
Get ready for the bold flavor of a cajun seasoned chicken breast, grilled to perfection, with fresh jalapeno jack cheese, lettuce, tomato, pickles, and tangy chipotle-ranch dressing (ranch with a hint of smoked jalapeno) topped with Chili's famous Awesome Blossom® strings. Served with fresh homestyle fries. A two fisted feast of a sandwich available only at Chili's.

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